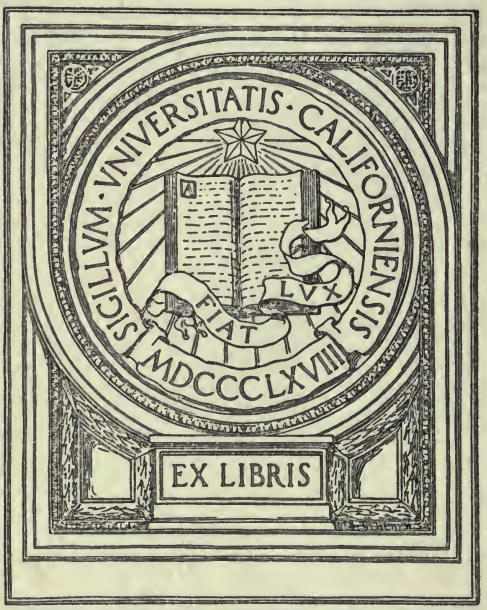
GIFT OF
Professor G. R. Noyes



FAMILIAR TALKS

ON SOME OF

SHAKSPEARE'S COMEDIES.

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FAMILIAR TALKS

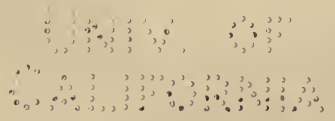
ON SOME OF

SHAKSPEARE'S COMEDIES.

BY

ELIZABETH WORMELEY LATIMER.

THE WINTER'S TALE.
THE TEMPEST.
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.
TAMING OF THE SHREW.
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.
AS YOU LIKE IT.
TWELFTH NIGHT.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.
CYMBELINE.



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GIFT OF
Professor G. R. Noyes

TO WILL
ANDREWS

University Press:
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PREFACE.

THESE Parlor Lectures were given in Baltimore, to a large and appreciative class of ladies. In examining great masses of Shakspearian criticism during their preparation, I was surprised to find how little of the same kind of work has been done. We have (besides Hudson and Dowden) Hazlitt's characters, which are very brief; Coleridge's inestimable notes, which too often are mere jottings; Maginn's papers, which I find a little strained; Gervinus, who writes with Teutonic care, insight, and heaviness; Richard Grant White, whose most finished essay is on a play not included in this volume; Christopher North, whose sparklets of Shakspearian criticism are scattered up and down old volumes of Blackwood; Mrs. Jameson's most excellent "Characteristics of Women;" Lady Martin's recent letters on some of Shakspeare's female characters; and a series of papers, still incomplete, in the English "Monthly Packet" (edited by Miss Yonge), called "Shakspeare Talks with Uncritical People," by Constance O'Brian. There are also notes to all editions

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of the plays; besides which a great deal of fugitive Shakspearian criticism — of the kind I wanted — can be found in magazines, inaccessible for the most part to the general reader. To all these I acknowledge the greatest obligations, in trying to do for each play as a whole what Mrs. Jameson and Lady Martin have done for its heroine. To the erudite who write for University men, I leave all points of what is called Shakspearian criticism. I have attempted nothing but to bring out obvious points of dramatic interest, and to enable those whom I addressed to get a clear view of the story and the characters.

If I can do anything towards opening the "mighty book" for those who have not time or facilities for searching out what I have done from various sources, I shall feel very glad that I undertook a task which at first I shrank from as beyond my powers.

I found however, that my habit, as a novelist, of studying characters, and, as it were, working in fiction, gave me a certain insight even into Shakspeare's mind. I feel very sure that his characters started from some germ, and evolved themselves as he wrote; that they grew, in short, beneath his hand, and were not laid down by line and rule beforehand. He had an inner sense which made it impossible for him to make any of his creatures (unless it may be Oliver, in "As You Like It") act "out of character."

Lord Tennyson is reported to have said, in the course of some discussion on the recent abuses of

biography, that the world should be thankful there are but five facts absolutely known to us about Shakspeare. These five indisputable facts are, the date of his birth, — St. George's Day, April 23, 1564, six years after the accession of Queen Elizabeth; his marriage when he was only nineteen to Anne Hathaway; his connection with the Globe Theatre, and with Blackfriars; his retirement from theatrical life, with a competency, to Stratford-upon-Avon; and the date of his death, which took place upon the anniversary of his birth, 1616, five years after the publication of King James' translation of the English Bible. Knight's bulky and interesting life of Shakspeare contains but these five facts; the rest of the book consists of guess-work and side-shows.

There are five portraits of Shakspeare, two of which may possibly be genuine; and recently in Germany a death-mask has been found, marked 1616, which is supposed to have been taken from his dead face. The evidence is curious, but not conclusive; it may be found in a paper by Dr. Ingleby and in "Scribner's Monthly."

His name he spelled Shakspere. His arms were given to his family for services rendered to Henry VII. on Bosworth-field. He had two daughters, Susanna and Judith. Susanna married a somewhat learned physician and strict Puritan, — Dr. Hall. They had one little daughter, Elizabeth, a great pet with her grandfather. She was twice married, but was

childless. She lived to a good old age, and died in the reign of Charles II. Judith married a citizen of Stratford, whose name was Quimby. She had no children. She and her brother Hamet (born before their father was twenty-one) were twins. Hamet died in early boyhood, to the great grief of his father.

Shakspeare had brothers, though little is known of them; he had also uncles of the same name. From one of these the Shakspeares in America claim to be descended.

When Dante found himself in that outer circle of the Inferno where poets and their *dramatis personæ* lived in honor and great glory, deprived of heavenly light, but illuminated by artificial brilliancy, Virgil introduced him to the company of the five great poets of the world, under the captaincy of Homer, who admitted him (the sixth) into their company. I never read this passage in the "Inferno" without thinking how time has altered the rank of these six great ones. Homer retains his sovereignty, but next to him stands Shakspeare; Dante ranks the third. The three other places may be still matter of dispute. We shall surely not elect to them Lucan, Horace, and Ovid, — perhaps even Virgil may not be one.

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THE WINTER'S TALE.

FAMILIAR TALKS

ON SOME OF

SHAKSPEARE'S COMEDIES.

THE WINTER'S TALE.

"THIS name," says Coleridge, "is admirably adapted to the Play throughout." Shakspeare makes little Mamillius say, "A sad tale 's best for winter;" and this play is more properly a dramatic tale than a drama, for it does not respect dramatic proprieties, but is in two parts, — as much so as "Henry IV." is in two parts, or "Henry VI." in three. The first part is in three acts; then an interval of fifteen years occurs between that part and the last two acts, which form a sequel to the first play or part, with different *dramatis personæ*.

The story is taken from a novel by Richard Greene, a gentleman and scholar, who first published his story in 1588, the year of the Armada. From internal evidence Shakspeare seems to have written "The Winter's Tale" six years before his death, in 1610; and it is known to have been performed in 1613, for we have a report of the play, as minute as the work of a dramatic critic in our newspapers, preserved in the diary of an old gentleman who was present at the performance. It was first published in the old "Folio" of 1623; had this not been the case it would have been lost to us, for no earlier copy has been preserved.

The critics in the century that succeeded that of Shakspeare's death speak of it slightingly. Horace Walpole, not knowing the date of its composition or first performance, makes a long argument to prove that it was a sequel, or second-part, to "Henry VIII.," and that it was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, being the history of her mother, Anne Boleyn, in a sort of allegory. This criticism is very queer and ingenious, proving how interpretations the most plausible can go astray.

It has been considered a particularly good acting-play, though there are no star-parts in it. A few years ago it was revived in New York as a kind of spectacular drama, everything being subordinated to the *mise en scène*. I heard one gentleman who was present regretting that Shakspeare could not have seen all the surroundings of his drama realized; but I heard another remark that it was painful to him to have Shakspeare's poetry and Shakspeare's characters crowded out, as it were, to give place to materialism. I suppose the effect produced depended on the personal temperament of the beholder. In Greene's novel the conclusion of the story is painful and disgusting. There is no return of Hermione, and the Leontes of the play commits suicide. Antigones, Paulina, and Autolycus are characters entirely added by Shakspeare.

The scene of the play is first in Sicily, then in Bohemia. As the eldest daughter of King James, the beautiful Elizabeth, was aspiring to the crown of Bohemia at the time Shakspeare was writing "The Winter's Tale," he must have been perfectly familiar with its surroundings and geography; nevertheless, no end of fun has been made out of the fact that Bohemia in the play is a maritime kingdom. In the

first place, no author is responsible for the geography of fairy-land. Secondly, Shakspeare took Bohemia for the locality of his story because Greene did so before him. Thirdly, it may have been a joke; for in a burlesque book of travels of that day, a London alderman is represented as asking if the British fleet had arrived in Bohemia! Fourthly, Shakspeare and Greene may have been in the right; for the Goths who settled in Bohemia were part of a tribe — the Boli — half of which established itself on the northwestern coast of Italy. Out of all these explanations we are at liberty to choose. I prefer the first one; but the case is much like the defence of the Irishman who stole the gridiron: 1. That he had never seen it. 2. That it was good for nothing when he got it. 3. That he had carried it home again.

Coleridge says of this Play that "its idea is a genuine jealousy of disposition, and that it should be immediately followed by the perusal of Othello, which is the direct contrast to it in every particular. For jealousy," he continues, "is a vice of the mind, a culpable tendency of temper, having certain well-known and well-defined defects and concomitants, all of which are visible in Leontes, and not one, I boldly say, in Othello; such as, first, an excitability for the most inadequate causes, and an eagerness to snatch at proofs; secondly, a grossness of conception, and a disposition to degrade the subject of the passion; thirdly, a sense of shame in the jealous man for his own feelings, — betrayed in moodiness and solitariness; which nevertheless is forced to utter itself, and therefore catches at hints and ambiguities, and goes on talking to those who cannot understand, — in short, in a soliloquy in the form of dialogue, confused, broken, fragmentary; fourthly, a dread of vulgar

ridicule, distinct from a high sense of honor; and fifthly, selfish vindictiveness. Shakspeare has displayed jealousy as acting on four different minds. In Ford, in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' it is ridiculous; in Leontes it is, as it were, *pur et simple*, acting on a wayward and inferior character; in Othello, a noble but impulsive nature is goaded by the basest arts into a jealous rage, — the more easily that Othello is always conscious of not being to the 'manner born,' in the society and position he is placed in; he fancies therefore that others must know better than himself. In Posthumus jealousy is an error of judgment; his understanding has been cheated by the most damning evidence, and it is due to his own honor to punish Imogen's supposed infidelity; but in Leontes jealousy is part of his disposition; he suspects without cause, condemns without proof, is mean, insulting, and cruel. Hermione, his wife, is a matron, queen, and mother. Her character is one of Shakspeare's noblest. Her distinguishing characteristics are self-restraint and dignity. She is shown less perhaps in what she says herself than in the impression she never fails to produce on others."

"Her composure of temper never forsakes her," says Mrs. Jameson, "and yet it is so delineated that the impression is that of grandeur, and never borders upon pride or coldness. It is the fortitude of a clear but strong mind conscious of its innocence." Mrs. Jameson thinks also that the character of Hermione is conceived upon the principles of ancient art, where grace is combined with strength. "In Hermione," she says, "we have the same largeness of conception and delicacy of execution, the same effect of suffering without passion, and grandeur without effort, as in the highest works

of Grecian art." Shakspeare seems to have felt in himself, and by intuition, what art-students study all their lives; and "the classic beauty of Hermione is heightened by the pastoral sweetness of Perdita, and a certain Gothic savagery in her surroundings."

Act I. *Scene* 1.

The play opens in an ante-room in Leontes' palace in Sicily. Polixenes, the former schoolmate of Leontes, and King of Bohemia, has been paying his old friend a long visit. The speakers are two noblemen, — one of Bohemia, the other of Sicily, — who out-do each other in polite compliments. The Sicilian, Camillo, is an old and trusty counsellor of King Leontes, a good man but a weak one, wholly unfitted to cope with the difficulties into which he is drawn by the wayward temper of the King his master. Coleridge bids us remark how easy is the style of the chit-chat between these noblemen, as contrasted with the elevated diction of the Kings and Hermione in the second scene. They end by both breaking into praises of the only child of Leontes, the heir of Sicily, — poor little Prince Mamillius.

Scene 2.

This scene is in a room of state, into which enter Leontes, Polixenes, Hermione, Mamillius, attendants, and Camillo. Polixenes is talking of the length of time he has been absent from Bohemia and the necessity of his return. To-morrow, he says, he must take his farewell of his friends. He has presentiments that he is needed in his kingdom. Leontes, from pure wilfulness apparently, and a desire to get his own way even in trifles, presses his guest to stay, with a

persistence that is far beyond the rules of hospitality. Polixenes behaves with great politeness, but he is firm. No tongue, he says, could move him sooner than his friend's, but he must go. Then Leontes turns to Hermione and asks her why she does not second his request? Willing to please her husband even in his whim, she joins in the discussion. She does not, however, address Polixenes himself, but her husband. "Tell him you are sure all in Bohemia 's well." Her husband being pleased with this remark, she goes further. She recognizes the reasonableness of Polixenes' wish to be gone, but begs for one week more, adding: "When my lord returns your visit next year, in Bohemia, I 'll give him leave to stay a month" beyond the time fixed for his departure; "and yet," she adds at once, knowing her husband's disposition, and seeing a frown gathering upon his forehead, "yet in good deed, Leontes, I love thee not one atom [one tick of the clock] less than the most loving lady loves her lord." Most charmingly she prays Polixenes to consent; and he, not proof against the persuasions of a queen and lady, gives in. "Then come," replies Hermione in triumph, "I 'll question you of my lord's tricks and yours when you were boys."

She then goes on (while Leontes turns aside) with pretty *badinage*, such as a charming woman might well use to her husband's friend. Leontes interrupts them with, "Is he won yet?" Hermione replies, "He 'll stay, my lord." Instantly a jealous thought flashes into Leontes' mind. He has not yet any fancy, I think, concerning guilt between his friend and wife, but has a jealous dislike to having any one succeed where he has failed. Those who have had to soothe minds liable to jealousy know how true is all this scene, —

the flash of suspicion that another is preferred; the shame felt for it; the effort to recover himself in the next words; then the attempt to draw from Hermione something flattering to his own self-love, to soothe the sting; while Hermione, in glad spirits, well pleased with her own success and at the evident admiration of the two men, goes on to be more charming and more gracious to Polixenes than it is wise to have been, — all the time thinking that she is gratifying her husband. She even gives her hand to Polixenes; seeing which, the very fiend of jealousy enters into Leontes, and he breaks out into a speech vulgar, abusive, coarse, such as only a man with a tainted mind, I think, would have thought of.

I conceive of Leontes as *le mari difficile.* It seems to me that Hermione is under the constant fear of offending him; that he is a man whose behavior is guided not by principles but moods, — the hardest of all men to deal with, because a wife never knows "where to find" such a husband. When Hermione has succeeded, as she thinks, in pleasing him, a weight is lifted off her heart; she has stepped into sunshine, — the last and only gleam of sunshine in the rest of her sad life; for it is a "Winter's Tale" so far as Hermione is concerned. All pretty graces and sweet coquetries peep out, and she is charming with Polixenes to her own destruction.

Then Leontes, baser and baser, "beset with doubts and fears, and entangled more and more" in the labyrinth of thorns he has created for himself, turns to his boy. He wishes to make sure, he says, that he is like him — his father. The likeness is too unmistakable for jealousy itself to deny. The whole address to the child — to whom happily its insinuations must have been incomprehensible — is disgusting.

The "rough pash" means a rough head of hair. The "welkin eyes" are blue eyes. The endearments are all coarse and disagreeable.

As Leontes continues his broken soliloquy Polixenes begins to perceive that something has gone wrong, and he and Hermione knowing the disposition of the moody friend and husband, unite to smooth the "raven down of darkness." Leontes turns off their inquiries, and continues toying with his son. "Mine honest friend, wilt thou take eggs for money?" is a proverbial expression equal to our saying now-a-days: Would you exchange a good horse for a gross of green spectacles?

Pleased with the boy's answer the father says: "May his life be a happy one — Happy man be his dole!" Alas! poor child, that father's jealousy was to extinguish that bright young life in a few days.

Polixenes is induced to speak of his son Florizel, the future hero of the second part of the play, the spring-time of the "Winter's Tale." With fresh exhortations to Hermione to be courteous to his friend and brother-king, Leontes walks off with Mamillius; but Hermione's brief time of happiness and brightness is over. She is doubtless taking counsel with Polixenes how Leontes may be soothed back to good humor, while Leontes goes on with his conversation with his boy, or rather his soliloquy addressed to him in innuendoes. Mamillius, though not understanding the foul talk, has wit enough to see that the one reflection that seems to soothe his father is the recollection of the striking likeness that exists between them.

Then having sent the child to play, Leontes calls Camillo, and bewilders that good councillor (used as he has long been

to his master's moods) by the staggering intensity of feeling in the speeches he makes him. Camillo does not seem to understand how to answer him. In the course of the talk we gather that Leontes has been at some time in his career a man of loose life, which accounts for his vulgar insinuations and his base ideas of women.

Camillo, finding himself mysteriously accused, makes a dignified defence, and asks what is his trespass: —

> My gracious lord,
> I may be negligent, foolish, and fearful;
> In every one of these no man is free,
> But that his negligence, his folly, fear,
> Among the infinite doings of the world
> Sometimes puts forth. In *your* affairs, my lord,
> If ever I were wilful-negligent,
> It was my folly; if industriously
> I played the fool, it was my negligence,
> Not weighing well the end; if ever fearful
> To do a thing, where I the issue doubted,
> Whereof the execution did cry out
> Against the non-performance, 't was a fear
> Which oft infects the wisest: these, my lord,
> Are such allowed infirmities that honesty
> Is never free of. But, beseech your grace,
> Be plainer with me; let me know my trespass
> By its own visage: if I then deny it
> 'T is none of mine.

Leontes in answer breaks out into an incoherent speech, calling his wife the worst of names. Camillo's indignation is not only noble in itself, but it shows the opinion entertained of Queen Hermione by all the court.

> *Camillo.* I would not be a stander-by to hear
> My sovereign mistress clouded so, without
> My present vengeance taken: 'shrew my heart,
> You never spoke what did become you less

> Than this; which to reiterate were sin
> As deep as *that* — 'though true.

Then Leontes raves like a madman, and without any diplomatic preparation, proposes to Camillo to poison Polixenes. Camillo tries to temporize, — to make terms for Hermione, — to let this storm blow over. He has no intention, I am sure, of murdering Polixenes, though he is sorely perplexed as to how he ought to act, being a good man rather than a quick-witted one. He speaks of Leontes as one "who in rebellion with himself would have all that are his so too."

I have dwelt long on this scene because it seems to me a very wonderful one, and I have never known it commented upon. Leontes, promising Camillo to *seem* friendly to his guest, goes out, and in a few moments Polixenes enters. He has encountered Leontes, who, instead of keeping his promise to Camillo, has not been willing to speak to him.

Polixenes cannot understand what is going on, and is anxious to get some light upon the mystery from Camillo. By degrees he draws the truth from the old Councillor, who is willing, yet ashamed to tell it, — conscious, too, that he is sacrificing his own prospects in life, but faithful to his duty and his Queen. The amazement of Polixenes at the revelation is great, and his repudiation of the baseness attributed to him is more in sorrow than in anger. Camillo says truly that the sea might as soon be forbidden to obey the moon as Leontes be by any means convinced of his own folly. The only thing to be done is for Polixenes, accompanied by Camillo, to put to sea immediately. In Polixenes' last speech you will observe that he expresses no amazement at the monstrous wickedness of Leontes. He has known his way-

wardness of old. He thinks that when he himself is out of the way his friend will recover his temper and his senses.

> *Polixenes.* . . . Give me thy hand!
> Be pilot to me, and thy places shall
> Still neighbor mine. My ships are ready
> And my people did expect my hence departure
> Two days ago. This jealousy
> Is for a precious creature; as she 's rare
> Must it be great; and, as his person 's mighty
> Must it be violent; and, as he does conceive
> He is dishonored by a man which ever
> Professed to love him, his revenges must
> In that be made more bitter. Fear o'ershades me:
> Good expedition be my friend, and comfort
> The gracious Queen! . . . Come, Camillo;
> I will respect thee as a father if
> Thou bear'st my life off hence. . . .
> *Camillo.* It is in mine authority to command
> The keys of all the posterns. Please your highness
> To take the urgent hour: come, sir, away!

Act II. *Scene* 1.

This act opens in Hermione's apartments. She is preoccupied, anxious, and far from well; her little son worries her, and she asks the ladies round her to take him for a time away from her. They try to excite the boy's jealousy by predicting that his mother will soon have a fine new prince, and will not care for him; but Mamillius has not his father's disposition. His mother, returning, asks him to sit by her and tell her a fairy story. "Come on, and do your best to fright me with your sprites; you 're powerful at it!" But the story gets no further than "There was a man dwelt by a church-yard," when it is interrupted by the entrance of Leontes and his courtiers. He is furious at

the escape of Polixenes and Camillo, and, with dogged determination to turn every circumstance to evil account, he insists that Camillo was the confederate of Polixenes. Then he snatches his son away from his astonished wife. The scene is a very painful one. You will remark Hermione's sweet dignity. Long ago, probably, she had learned to bear unreasonable fault-finding from her husband. She knows that in his present mood no reasoning would move him; she simply makes her protest to the lords, who are all upon her side; she has not an enemy in her husband's court except the man who had vowed to love, cherish, and honor her.

Leontes. Give me the boy! I am glad you did not nurse him.
Though he does bear some signs of me, yet you
Have too much blood in him.
Hermione. What is this? — sport?
Leontes. Bear the boy hence, he shall not come about her.
Away with him! . . . you, my lords,
Look on her, mark her well. But be about
To say: "She is a goodly lady," and
The justice of your hearts will thereto add,
"'T is pity she 's not honest — honorable."
Praise her but for this, her without-door form,
Which on my faith deserves high speech, and straight
The shrug — the hum — or ha — those petty brands
That calumny doth use, — O, I am wrong! —
That *mercy* does; for calumny will fear
Virtue itself, — these shrugs, these hums and ha's,
When you have said, "She 's goodly," come between
Ere you can say, "She 's honest." But be it known
From him that has most cause to grieve it should be,
She 's an adulteress.
Hermione. Should a villain say so —
The most replenished villain in the world —
He were as much more villain! *you*, my lord,
Do but mistake.

Leontes. *You* have mistook, my lady,
Polixenes for Leontes. . . . I have said
She 's an adulteress; I have said with whom;
More! she 's a traitress, and Camillo is
Confederate with her, and one that knows,
What she should shame to know herself,
That she 's a perjured woman, e'en as bad as those
That vulgars give bold titles; ay, and privy
To this their late escape.
Hermione. No! by my life
Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,
When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that
You thus have published me! Gentle my lord,
You scarce can right me throughly then to say
You did mistake.
Leontes. No, no; if I mistake
In those foundations which I build upon,
The centre is not big enough to bear
A schoolboy's top. Away with her to prison!
He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty
For even speaking.
Hermione. There 's some ill planet reigns.
I must be patient, till the heavens look
With an aspéct more favorable. Good my lords,
I am not prone to weeping, as our sex
Commonly are; the want of which vain dew
Perchance shall dry your pities: but I have
That honorable grief lodged *here* which burns
Worse than tears drown. Beseech you all, my lords,
With thoughts so qualified as your charities
Shall best instruct you, measure me; and so
The King's will be performed!
Leontes [*to the guards*]. Shall I be heard?
Hermione. Who is it goes with me? Beseech your highness
My women may be with me; for you see
My plight requires it. Do not weep, good fools,
There is no cause. When you shall know your mistress
Has deserved prison, then abound in tears.
Adieu, my lord. I never wished to see you sorry;
Now I trust I shall. My women, come;
You have leave. [*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*

1 *Lord.* Beseech your highness, call the Queen again.

Antigonus. Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice
Prove violence; in the which three great ones suffer, —
Yourself, your queen, your son.

1 *Lord.* For her, my lord,
I dare my life lay down, and will do 't, sir,
Please you to accept it, that the Queen is spotless
In the eyes of heaven, and to you. I mean
In this which you accuse her.

Antigonus. Ay! every drachm of woman's flesh is false
If she be.

Leontes. Hold your peace.

1 *Lord.* Good my lord —

Antigonus. It is for you we speak, not for ourselves.
You are abused, and by some putter-on
That will be damned for it. Would I knew the villain;
I would land-damn him!

Leontes. Cease — no more.
You smell this business with a sense as cold
As is a dead man's nose. I see 't and feel 't. . . .
We need no more of your advice; the matter,
The loss, the gain, the ordering on 't, is all
Properly ours.

Antigonus. And I wish, my liege,
You had only in your silent judgment tried it,
Without more overture.

Leontes. . . . For fuller confirmation, —
For in an act of this importance 't were
Most piteous to be wild, — I have despatched in post
To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,
Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know
Of stuffed sufficiency. Now from the oracle
They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had
Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?

1 *Lord.* *Well* done, my lord.

Leontes. Though I am satisfied, and need no more
Than what I know, yet shall the oracle
Give rest to the minds of others: such as he
Whose ignorant credulity will not
Come up to the truth. So we have thought it good
From our free person she should be confined,

Lest that the treachery of the two fled hence
Be left her to perform. Come, follow us;
We are to speak in public, for this business
Will raise us all.
Antigonus [*aside*]. To mockery, as I take it,
If the good truth were known.

Scene 2.

We have a new character in this second scene, — Hermione's good friend Paulina, who is striving to make her way into her lady's prison. "The character of Paulina," says Mrs. Jameson, "though it has obtained little notice and no critical remark that I have seen, is yet one of the striking beauties of the play, and it has its moral too. Shakspeare puts his characters in contrast, — Emilia beside Desdemona, the Nurse beside Juliet, the clowns and merry pedler-thief beside Perdita; so Paulina is the friend of Hermione.[1] Paulina does not fill any ostensible office near the person of the Queen, but is a lady of high rank in the court, — the wife of the Lord Antigonus. She is a character strongly drawn from real and common life, — a clever, generous, strong-minded, warm-hearted woman, fearless in asserting the truth, firm in her sense of right, enthusiastic in all her affections, quick in thought, resolute in word, and energetic in action; but heedless, hot-tempered, impatient, loud, bold, voluble, and turbulent of tongue, regardless of the feelings of those for whom she would sacrifice herself, and injuring from excess of zeal

[1] We may remark here how different are the *confidantes* of the French stage from those of Shakspeare. No foreigner probably enjoys Corneille and Racine more than I do, — but these people are terrible. There is not one shade of difference among them; they are simply put into the play to be talked to.

those she would most wish to serve. The manner in which all the evil and dangerous tendencies of such a temper are placed before us, even while the individual character preserves the strongest hold upon our respect and admiration, forms an impressive lesson as well as a natural and delightful portrait. In the scene (act ii., scene 3), for instance, in which she brings the infant before Leontes with the hope of softening him to a sense of his injustice, — 'an office' which, as she observes, 'becomes a woman best,' — her want of self-government, and her bitter, inconsiderate reproaches only add, as we might easily suppose they would, to his fury."

The scene is in the outer room of a prison. Paulina, as befits a great lady, comes in with her attendants.

Paulina. The keeper of the prison! — call for him.
Let him have knowledge who I am. Good lady!
No court in Europe is too good for thee;
What dost thou then in prison? [*Here enters the Keeper.*
Now, good sir,
You know me — do you not?
Keeper. For a worthy lady,
And one whom I much honor.
Paulina. Pray you, then,
Conduct me to the Queen.
Keeper. I may not, madam. To the contrary
I have express commands.
Paulina. Here 's ado
To lock up honesty and honor from
The access of gentle visitors! Is it lawful,
Pray you, to see her women? — any of them? —
Emilia?
Keeper. So please you, madam, to put
Apart these your attendants, I shall bring
Emilia forth.
Paulina. I pray you now call her.
Withdraw yourselves. [*Exeunt Attendants.*

Keeper. And, madam,
I must be present at your conference.
Paulina. Well, be it so, prithee. [*Exit Keeper.*
Here 's such ado to make no stain a stain
As passes coloring. [*Re-enter Keeper, with Emilia.*
Dear gentlewoman, how fares our gracious lady?
Emilia. As well as one so great and so forlorn
May hold together. On her frights and griefs
(Which never tender lady hath borne greater)
She is, something before her time, delivered.
Paulina. A boy?
Emilia. A daughter, and a goodly babe,
Lusty and like to live. The Queen receives
Much comfort in it; says: "My poor prisoner,
I am innocent as you."
Paulina. I dare be sworn. These dangerous
Insane furies of the King, beshrew them,
He must be told on 't, and he shall. The office
Becomes a woman best; I 'll take 't upon me.
If I prove honey-mouthed, let my tongue blister.
. . . Pray you, Emilia,
Commend my best obedience to the Queen.
If she dares trust me with her little babe,
I 'll show 't the King, and undertake to be
Her advocate to the loudest. We do not know
How he may soften at the sight o' the child.
The silence often of pure innocence
Persuades, when speaking fails. . . .
Keeper. Madam, if 't please the Queen to send the babe,
I know not what I shall incur to pass it,
Having no warrant.
Paulina. Do not you fear; upon
Mine honor I will stand 'twixt you and danger.

Scene 3.

With the baby in her arms Paulina forces her way into Leontes' presence, and wakes him from his slumber. Exasperated by her reproaches, he orders the infant to be burned,

and turns upon Antigonus, Paulina's husband. All present join in entreating him to have mercy. The babe lies at his feet, where it has been placed by Paulina.

1 *Lord.* Beseech your highness,
We have truly served you: on our knees we beg,
As recompense for our dear services
Past and to come, that you do change this purpose,
Which, being so horrible, so bloody, must
Lead on to some foul issue. We all kneel.

Leontes. I am a feather to each wind that blows;
Shall I live on to see this bastard kneel
And call me father? Better burn it now
Than curse it then. But be so. Let it live. . . .
It shall not neither. . . .

[*To Antigonus.*] You, sir, come you hither;
You that have been so tenderly officious
With Lady Margery, your midwife there,
To save this bastard's life, — for *'t is* a bastard,
So sure as this beard 's gray, — what will you adventure
To save this brat's life?

Antigonus. Anything, my lord,
That my ability may undergo
And nobleness impose; at least thus much:
I 'll pawn the little blood which I have left
To save the innocent, — anything possible.

Leontes. It shall be possible. Swear by this sword
Thou wilt perform my bidding.

Antigonus. I will, my lord.

Leontes. Mark and perform it (see'st thou?); for the fail
Of any point in 't shall not only be
Death to thyself, but to thy loud-tongued wife,
Whom for this time we pardon. We enjoin thee,
As thou art liegeman to us, that thou carry
This female bastard hence; and that thou bear it
To some remote and desert place, quite out
Of our dominions; and that there thou leave it,
Without more mercy, to its own protection
And favor of the climate. As by strange fortune

It came to us, I do in justice charge thee —
On thy soul's peril, and thy body's torture —
That thou commend it strangely to some place
Where chance may nurse or end it. Take it up.
Antigonus [*lifting the babe*]. I swear to do this, though a present death
Had been more merciful. Come on, poor babe!
Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens
To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, they say,
Casting their savageness aside, have done
Like offices of pity.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

The messengers, returning from Delphos after a prosperous and delightful journey, are shocked to find Hermione's guilt set forth on all the walls by proclamation. How natural it is that, their heads being full of what they have enjoyed and seen, they cannot at once adjust their minds to the things around them.

Scene 2.

This is in a so-called court of justice, but Leontes means to have everything his own way. The court *must* find against his wife; the oracle *must* condemn her.

See the queenly dignity of Hermione. She will not break out into reproaches against her king and husband, but one is conscious she is feeling contempt for him; and one sees how a sense of her great wrongs has entered into her soul.

Hermione. Since what I am to say must be but that
Which contradicts my accusation, and
The testimony on my part no other
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
To say, Not guilty. Mine integrity,
Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,

Be so received. But thus: If powers divine
Behold our human actions (as they do),
I doubt not then but innocence shall make
False accusation blush, and tyranny
Tremble at patience. You, my lord, best know,
Who least will seem to do so, my past life
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,
As I am now unhappy. . . . Behold me now,
A fellow of the royal bed, which owns
A moiety of the throne, a great king's daughter,
The mother to a hopeful prince, — here standing
To prate and talk for life and honor, 'fore
Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it
As I weigh grief, which I would spare; for honor —
'Tis a derivative from me to mine
And only *that* I stand for. I appeal
To your own conscience, sir, — before Polixenes
Came to your court, how was I in your grace?
How merited to be so?
Since he came if I have ever stepped beyond
The bound of honor, or, in act, or will
That way inclined me, hardened be the hearts
Of all that hear me, and my nearest kin
Cry, Fie upon my grave!

Leontes. I ne'er heard yet
That any of the bolder vices wanted
Less impudence to gainsay what they did,
Than to perform it first.

Hermione. That's true enough,
Though 't is a saying, sir, not due to me.
For Polixenes,
With whom I am accused, I do confess
I loved him as in honor he required,
With such a kind of love as might become
A lady like me, — with a love even such,
So and no other, as yourself commanded.
Which not to have done I think had been in me
Both disobedience and ingratitude,
To you, and toward your friend, whose love had spoke,
E'en since it could speak, from an infant, freely,

That it was yours. Now, for conspiracy,
All that I know of it
Is that Camillo was an honest man;
And why he left your court, the gods themselves,
Wotting no more than I, are ignorant.
Leontes. You knew of his departure.
You are past all shame; those of your sort are so.
Thy brat hath been cast out, like to itself
No father owning it (which is indeed
More criminal in thee than it): so thou
Shalt feel our justice, — in whose easiest passage
Look for no less than death.
Hermione. Sir, spare your threats;
The bug[1] which you would fright me with I seek.
To me can life be no commodity;
The crown and comfort of my life, your favor,
I do give lost, — for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went; my second joy
And first-fruits of my body, from his presence
I am barred like one infectious; my third comfort,
Starred most unluckily, is from my breast —
The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth —
Haled out to murder. Myself on every post
Proclaimed a strumpet; with immodest hatred
The child-bed privilege denied, which 'longs
To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried
Here to this place i' the open air, before
I have regained my strength. Now, good my liege,
Tell me what blessings I have here alive
That I should fear to die! Therefore proceed;
But yet hear this, — mistake me not; no! life,
I prize it not a straw, — but for mine honor
Which I would free, if I shall be condemned
Upon surmises — all proofs sleeping else
But what your jealousies awake — I tell you
'T is rigor, and not law! Your honors all,

[1] The Elizabethan word for terror. The verse in King James' Bible which reads: "Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night" — stands in an earlier version: "Thou shalt not be afraid for any bug by night," etc.

I do refer me to the oracle;
Apollo be my judge.
1 *Lord.* This your request
Is altogether just: therefore bring forth,
And in Apollo's name, his oracle.
[*Exeunt certain officers.*]
Hermione. The Emperor of Russia was my father;
O that he were alive, and here beholding
His daughter's trial! that he did but see
The flatness of my misery; yet with eyes
Of pity, not revenge!

The oracle returns this answer: "Hermione is chaste, Polixenes blameless, Camillo a true subject, Leontes a jealous tryant, his innocent babe truly begotten; and the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found."

Leontes. Hast thou read truth?
Officer. Ay, my lord, even so
As it is here set down.
Leontes. There is no truth at all i' the oracle!
The sessions shall proceed; this is mere falsehood.

At this moment arrives news that Mamillius, the pretty boy torn from his mother's side, who has been ailing ever since he lost her care, is dead. Hermione faints away. Leontes is suddenly struck with the idea that he may have been unjust. He orders his wife's removal, and that care shall be taken of her, but he does not spring to her side. He cannot yet forgive her his own fault, but as he thinks over the matter his senses return to him, and he says:—

Apollo pardon
My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!—
I'll reconcile me with Polixenes,
New woo my Queen, recall the good Camillo,
Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy.

For, being transported by my jealousies
To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose
Camillo for the minister, to poison
My friend Polixenes; which had been done
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied
My swift command; though I, with death and with
Reward, did threaten and encourage him.
He, most humane
And filled with honor, to my kingly guest
Unclasped my practice; quit his fortunes here,
Which you knew great, and to the certain hazard
Of all uncertainties himself commended,
No richer than his honor. How he glisters
Thorough my rust! And how his piety
Does my deeds make the blacker!

In this speech the more Leontes says, the more he works himself up to a sense of the blackness of his injurious suspicions.

In this stage of his repentance Paulina rushes in with news of Hermione's death, and assuredly does not spare her royal master. A sentence in her speech bears out my description of Leontes as a *difficult husband*, — "Thy bygone fooleries were but spices to it!"

O thou tyrant!
Do not repent these things, for they are heavier
Than all thy woes can stir; therefore betake thee
To nothing but despair. A thousand knees,
Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,
Upon a barren mountain, and still winter,
In storm perpetual, could not move the gods
To look that way thou wert!
Leontes. Go on, go on!
Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved
All tongues to talk their bitterest.
1 *Lord* [*to Paulina*]. Say no more;
Howe'er the business goes, you have made fault
I' the boldness of your speech.

Paulina. I am sorry for 't.
All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,
I do repent. Alas! I have showed too much
The rashness of a woman. He is touched
To the noble heart.
[*She turns to Leontes.*] What 's gone and what 's past help
Should be past grief. Do not receive affliction
At my petition, I beseech you; rather
Let *me* be punished that have reminded you
Of what you should forget. Now, good my liege,
Sir, royal sir, forgive a foolish woman;
The love I bore your queen, — lo, fool again! —
I 'll speak of her no more, nor of your children.
I 'll not remember you of my own lord,
Who is lost too. Take your patience to you,
And I 'll say nothing.

Scene 3.

Antigonus, with the babe, has reached the sea-coast of Bohemia. The babe is laid upon the grass, and Antigonus is chased away by a bear. Then a shepherd comes upon the scene, followed by his clownish boy. He begins grumbling at some hunters who have driven off two of his sheep. He will never find them, he says; or if he does, it will be by the sea-shore, browsing upon ivy. How Shakspeare knew the secrets of nature! A great many years ago I heard a gentleman in Virginia remark that sheep were often poisoned by eating shoots of ivy.

The babe is picked up by the old man and his son, together with gold for its keeping; and the half-eaten remains of poor Antigonus (who has been killed by the bear) are piously committed to the earth by the two shepherds. One is very sorry for Antigonus, but his disappearance from the scene is essential to the after-part of the story.

Act IV.

Time enters and informs the audience concerning the events of the past fifteen years.

We are told that Leontes grieves for the effects of his rash jealousies.

Some people have wondered why Hermione, who is still alive, should have excluded herself all these years from her husband. Surely, patient Grizzel or Enid might have felt all wifely allegiance to Leontes dissolved by his behavior. Hermione was a queen and mother, as well as a wife. As queen, she had borne degradation; as mother, one child had died through the tyranny of her husband, the other had been cast away. To have condoned all this would have been to lower the character of Hermione. She cannot properly forgive Leontes till one child is restored to her. Remember that if Desdemona — if Imogen — could forgive, they could, through all their wrongs, respect their husbands. The murder of no children lay at Othello's or Posthumus' doors. Hermione as a wife has been repeatedly and publicly insulted. He to whom she gave herself has stooped to baseness and cruelty inconceivable. She knows the inmost nature of the man. Even if she could bring herself to return to him as his wife, it is doubtful whether she could possibly make him happy. She had failed in the pride of her youth, her beauty, and her unsmirched purity; since he has dissolved the bands that bound her to him, she accepts her release, — and in my opinion justly. As to repentance — she has known him repent a hundred times. Nothing, it seems to me, need constrain her again to take on her his yoke, but the welfare of her child.

Scene 1.

This new part of the play opens with a scene between Polixenes and Camillo. The latter has been the faithful prime councillor of the King of Bohemia these fifteen years. He is getting anxious to return to his own country. "The penitent King" whom he still calls "master" has sent for him, and he thinks he might comfort him in his loneliness and old age. For Leontes is old now; he was a gray-beard sixteen years before. He can hardly be far short of seventy. But it is now Polixenes' turn to press his guest to stay with him. There is a gentlemanliness and kindliness about Polixenes which are very attractive. "Of that fatal country, Sicily," he says, "prithee speak no more. Its very naming punishes me with the remembrance of that 'penitent,' as thou callest him, and reconciled king, my brother, whose loss of his most precious queen and children are even now to be fresh-lamented." Then he turns to a family trouble, in which he thinks Camillo may advise him. Prince Florizel absents himself from Court. His father has heard he haunts a shepherd's hut, and that the shepherd has grown rich mysteriously. Camillo helps him in his confidence. The father has not liked to touch on the most delicate point, but Camillo goes straight to it: the shepherd has a daughter of most rare loveliness. "Yes — that is what troubles me," says Polixenes in substance. "Let us disguise ourselves, my best Camillo, and go and investigate this matter for ourselves."

Scene 2.

This next scene is in the road near the cottage of the shepherd. In comes the gypsy scamp Autolycus. He is

now in rags. Once he had been serving-man to Prince Florizel, and worn a velvet livery. He boldly avers that he lives by thieving. In his own words, he is "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." His principal revenue, however, comes from stealing linen spread out to bleach upon the grass or on the hedges. In Shakspeare's time, it seems, such thefts were punished by whipping and the stocks; later there came to be so many Autolycuses that to steal linen put out to bleach was made a capital crime. I have some volumes of the Annual Register in George II.'s time, and it is frightful to read the record of poor wretches hung at Tyburn for this offence. As women spun their own linen on hand-looms in their own cottages, of course their "webs" were often laid out to bleach upon the hedges, and the loss was a very serious one to them. Autolycus avows himself a "prig" — the meanest kind of thief. He has not courage to be a highwayman, indeed he dreads all hardships and all punishment. As to everlasting punishment he puts the thought of it aside as inconvenient. At this point in his soliloquy there passes by the kindly shepherd-clown, brother by adoption to Perdita. He is taking money to the market-town to buy good things for the sheep-shearing feast, — sugar, currants, nutmegs, ginger, prunes, raisins, and coloring for stewed pears. He is startled, as he endeavors to make some mental calculations, by seeing a man grovelling in a ditch, uttering piercing cries for help. It is Autolycus. He says he has been robbed and beaten, and that he thinks his shoulder-blade is broken.

Clown. What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

Autolycus. A fellow, sir, that I have known in the worst company. I knew him once a servant of the Prince. He hath been since an

ape-bearer; then a process-server, a bailiff; then he compassed a motion of the prodigal son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile where my land and living lies; and having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only on rogue: some call him Autolycus.

Clown. Out upon him! Prig, for my life, prig. He haunts wakes, fairs, and bear-baitings.

Autolycus. Very true, sir, he, sir, he. That's the rogue that put me into this apparel.

Clown. Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia. If you had but looked big and spit at him, he 'd have run.

Autolycus. I must confess to you, sir, I am no fighter. I am false of heart that way, and that he knew, I warrant him.

The extreme kindliness and gullibility of the shepherd-lad are delightful. Autolycus takes advantage of his charitable assistance to pick his pocket. Hazlitt dwells with delight on his remembrance of Bannister's acting in this scene, on a night when Mrs. Siddons played Hermione, Kemble Leontes, and Mrs. Jordan Perdita. Strange to say, we are not very sorry for the clown's disappointment when he misses his purse, knowing that somehow there was "plenty of spice and all that 's nice" at the sheep-shearing supper.

Scene 3.

We are now in the cottage of the shepherd, with Prince Florizel and Perdita.

"The distinguishing traits of Perdita," says Mrs. Jameson, "are sentiment and elegance. She is the union of the pastoral and romantic with the classical and poetical, — as if a dryad of the woods had turned shepherdess. The perfections with which Shakspeare has so lavishly endowed her sit on her with a certain picturesque grace." We first meet her dressed as Flora for the sheep-shearing — I think by Prince Florizel's suggestion. Not for one moment have we

any fears for Perdita, nor has she for herself. She may be heart-broken by separation from her lover, but her honor is safe in Prince Florizel's hands. He is dressed like a shepherd, and delights in her adornments as making her temporarily above him. She is comparing, when we see her first, her own lowliness of station with his princely rank (for even as to his rank in life he has not deceived her), and expresses fears that their marriage cannot turn out happily. "But with all her timidity, and her sense of the distance which separates her from her lover, she breathes not a single word which could lead us to impugn either her delicacy or her dignity." Indeed, her dignity is enhanced by her hesitations.

Perdita. Sir, my gracious lord,
To chide at your extremes it not becomes me;
O, pardon that I name them. Your high self,
The gracious mark of the land, you have obscured
With a swain's wearing; and me, poor lowly maid,
Most goddess-like pranked up. But that our feasts
In every mess have folly, and the feeders
Digest it with a custom, I should blush
To see you so attired.
Florizel. I bless the time
When my good falcon made her flight across
Thy father's ground.
Perdita. Now Jove afford you cause!
To me the difference forges dread. Your greatness
Hath not been used to fear. E'en now I tremble
To think your father, by some accident,
Should pass this way, as you did. O, the Fates!
How would he look to see his work, so noble,
Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how
Should I, in these my borrowed flaunts, behold
The sternness of his presence?
Florizel. Apprehend
Nothing but jollity.

And so with tender words, and reiterations of his vows of love and marriage, he entreats her to cheer up, and look

> as if it were the day
> Of celebration of that nuptial, which
> We two have sworn shall come.

Here the good shepherd enters, with Polixenes and Camillo, so disguised that Florizel does not recognize them; they are followed by a crowd of rustic shepherd-girls, foils to fair Perdita. When she presents the flowers to Polixenes and Camillo, she is charming! Camillo is as much impressed by her as is his master, but he leaves admiring words to Polixenes. In the passage where Polixenes, forgetful that the theory he is advancing about grafts bears on his son's case and her own, argues with her about gillyflowers, how charming and how womanly she is! "She is not convinced, but she does not attempt to answer his reasoning. Woman-like, she gives up the argument, but woman-like retains her own conviction, her sense of right, unshaken by his sophistry." "She goes on talking to Florizel in a strain of poetry which comes over the soul like music and fragrance mingled. We seem to inhale the blended odors of a thousand flowers, till the sense faints with their sweetness." We cannot afford to miss a line of this sweet scene.

> *Florizel.* See, your guests approach;
> Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,
> And let 's be red with mirth.
> *Shepherd.* Fie, daughter! When my old wife lived, upon
> This day she was both pantler, butler, cook, —
> Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all;
> Would sing her song, or dance her turn: now here,
> At upper end o' the table, now i' the middle;
> On his shoulder and his, — her face afire
> With labor; and the thing she took to quench it,

She would to each one sip. *You* are retired,
As if you were a feasted one, and not
The hostess of the meeting. Pray you, bid
These unknown friends to us welcome; for it is
A way to make us better friends — more known.
Come, quench your blushes, and present yourself,
That which you are, mistress o' the feast. Come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flock shall prosper.

Perdita [*to Polixenes*]. Welcome, sir!
It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostess-ship o' the day.

[*To Camillo.*] You 're welcome, sir!
Give me those flowers there, Dorcas. Reverend sirs,
For you there 's rosemary and rue. *These* keep
Seeming and savor all the winter long.
Grace and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing.

Polixenes. Shepherdess,
A fair one are you, well you fit our ages
With flowers of winter.

Perdita. Sir, the year growing ancient, —
Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth
Of trembling winter, — the fairest flowers o' the season
Are our carnations, and streaked gillyflowers,
Which some call Nature's bastards. Of that kind
Our rustic garden 's barren; and I care not
To get slips of them.

Polixenes. Wherefore, gentle maiden,
Do you neglect them?

Perdita. For I have heard it said
There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
With great creating Nature.

Polixenes. Say there be —
Yet nature is made better by no mean
But nature makes that mean. So o'er that art
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
Which nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind

By bud of nobler race. This is an art
Which does mend nature — change it rather, but
The art itself is nature.
Perdita. So it is.
Polixenes. Then make your garden rich in gillyflowers,
And do not call them bastards.
Perdita. I'll not put
The dibble in earth to set one slip of them,
No more than, were I painted, I would wish
This youth should say 't were well —
[*To the rest.*] Here 's flowers for *you.*
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram,
The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun,
And with him rises weeping. These are flowers
Of middle summer, and I think are given
To men of middle age.
[*Receiving thanks.*] You are very welcome.
Camillo. I should leave grazing were I of your flock,
And live by gazing.
Perdita. Out! — alas,
You 'd be so lean that blasts of January
Would blow you through and through.
[*She turns to others.*] Now, my fairest friend,
I would I had some flowers o' the spring, that might
Become your time of day — and yours — and yours.
O Proserpina!
For the flowers now that, frighted, thou letst fall
From Dis's wagon, — daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, — a malady
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and
The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one. Oh! these I lack
To make you garlands of.
[*Then turning to Florizel.*] And, my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er.

Florizel. What? — like a corse?
Perdita. No — like a bank, for love to lie and play on;
Not like a corse, or if, — not to be buried,
But living in mine arms.
[*To others.*] Come, take your flowers.
[*To Florizel.*] Methinks I play as I have seen them do
In Whitsun pastorals; sure, this robe of mine
Doth change my disposition.
Florizel. What you do
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
I'd have you do it ever; when you sing,
I'd have you buy and sell so, so give alms,
Pray so; and for the ordering your affairs,
To sing them too. When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that, — move still, still so, and own
No other function.
Perdita. O Doricles!
Your praises are too large. But that your youth
And the true blood which fairly peeps through it
Do plainly give you out an unstained shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
You wooed me the false way.
Florizel. I think you have
As little skill to fear as I have purpose
To put you to it. But come, one dance I pray;
Your hand, my Perdita. So turtles pair
That never mean to part
Perdita. I'll swear for them.
Polixenes. This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever
Ran on the green-sward. Nothing she does or seems
But smacks of something greater than herself, —
Too noble for this place.
Camillo. He tells her something
That makes her blood look out. Good sooth, she is
The queen of curds and cream.

As the shepherd is conversing with Polixenes during the pauses of the dance, telling him how Doricles (the *alias* of Florizel) is in love with his daughter, and how, if he

marries her, she shall bring him that he little dreams of, a servant comes in announcing a pedler. His speech gives us a peep into English rural life, rather than that of Bohemia. *Points* are colored laces (that is, like shoe-laces or corset-laces), with tags to them; they were used for lacing up men's clothes. *Inkles* are tapes. *Caddisses*, what we now call skirt-braids. A *smock* is an under-garment, either shirt or chemise; the *sleeve-hand* is the cuff, the *square* the shirt-bosom. It is a sweet trait of Perdita's native delicacy that, as mistress of the feast, she charges her foster-brother to forewarn the ballad-singer to use no scurrilous words in his tunes.

Servant. O masters, if you did but hear the pedler at the door you would never dance again after a pipe and tabor. No! the bag-pipe would not move you. He sings several tunes faster than you can tell money. He utters them as he had eaten ballads, and men's ears grew to his tunes!

Clown. He could never come better; he shall come in. I love a ballad even too well, — if it be a doleful matter merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed and sung lamentably.

Servant. He hath songs, for man or woman, of all sizes. No milliner can so fit his customers with gloves. He has the prettiest love-songs for maids, all without ribaldry, which is strange. . . . He hath ribands of all colors of the rainbow; points more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross; inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns, — why, he sings them over as they were gods and goddesses; you would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chaunts to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on 't.

Clown. Prithee bring him in, and let him approach singing.

Perdita. Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in his tunes.

Enter Autolycus, singing.

Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;
Masks, for faces or for noses;

Bugle bracelets, necklace amber;
Perfume for a lady's chamber;
Golden coifs and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears;
Pins, and poking-sticks of steel;
What maids lack from head to heel.
Come buy of me; come buy, come buy!
Buy, lords, or else your lasses cry;
Come buy, come buy!

Meantime Camillo and Polixenes are talking with the shepherd, who apparently has let fall some hints of Perdita's history which strike Camillo, and make him have vague suspicions of the truth.

Twelve rustics habited as satyrs come in and dance. Then Polixenes, having found out all he came to learn, thinks it is time to part the lovers. But first he turns to Florizel.

Polixenes. How now, fair shepherd?
Your heart is full of something that does take
Your mind from feasting. Sooth when I was young,
And handed love, as you do, I was wont
To load my girl with knacks. I would have ransacked
The pedler's silken treasury, and have poured it
To her acceptance. *You* have let him go,
And nothing marted with him.
Florizel. Old sir, I know
She prizes not such trifles as these are.
The gifts she seeks from me are packed and locked
Up in my heart; which I have given already
But not delivered.

Then there comes the thought that now is a fit occasion for a betrothal before witnesses, such a betrothal as, though not a marriage, was deemed the sure pledge of the future ceremony. He turns from the two old men, men evidently of higher standing than the shepherds, to Perdita, and taking her hand says: —

O! hear me breathe my life
Before this ancient sir, who, it should seem,
Hath sometime loved. I take thy hand, this hand,
As soft as dove's down, and as white as it. . . .

Polixenes. What follows this?
How prettily the young swain seems to wash
The hand was fair before! I have put you out.
But to your protestation. Let me hear
What you profess.

Florizel. Do, and be witness to 't.

Polixenes. And this my neighbor too?

Florizel. And he, and more
Than he — or men; the earth, the heavens, and all,
That were I crowned the most imperial monarch,
Thereof most worthy; were I the fairest youth
That ever made eye swerve; had force and knowledge
More than were ever man's, — I would not prize them
Without her love; for her employ them all.

Polixenes. Fairly offered.

Camillo. This is a sound affection.

Shepherd. But, my daughter, say you the like to him?

Perdita. I cannot speak
As well, nothing so well, — no, nor mean better.
By the pattern of my own thoughts I cut out
The purity of his.

Shepherd. Take hands; a bargain.
And, friends unknown, you shall bear witness to 't.
I give my daughter to him, and will make
Her portion equal his.

Florizel. O! that must be
I' the virtue of your daughter. Some one being dead,
I shall have more than you can dream of yet, —
Enough then for your wonder. But come on;
Contract us 'fore these witnesses.

Shepherd. Come, your hand.
And, daughter, yours.

Polixenes. Soft swain, a while, beseech you.
Have you a father?

Florizel. I have; but what of him?

Polixenes. Knows he of this?

Florizel. He neither does, nor shall.

Then Polixenes reasons with the young man, pointing out that if the father be neither imbecile, very aged, nor unreasonable, it is his duty to consult him as to his marriage. This reasoning having failed, Polixenes condescends to plead: "Prithee, tell him." The shepherd joins in the entreaty: "He shall not need to grieve as knowing of thy choice." Then Florizel impatiently exclaims: "Come, come. He must not mark our contract." "Mark your *divorce*, young sir," exclaims the father, discovering himself. Exasperated beyond all bounds of pity, the first words of Polixenes are cruel threats against the shepherd and his daughter. He repents, and revokes his sentence almost as soon as it is out of his mouth; perchance he remembers what followed the rashness of his friend Leontes. But he peremptorily forbids the lovers ever to meet again, and quits the scene at once, leaving them in the presence of Camillo to say their parting words.

"Perdita under his threats had shown no fear whatever for herself, but her natural loftiness of spirit makes her resent menaces and revilings. She bears the royal frown without quailing, but the moment the King is gone, the immediate recollection of herself, and of her low estate, and of her hapless love is full of beauty, tenderness, and nature." "How more than exquisite," says Coleridge, "is her speech! And that profound touch of noble pride and grief venting themselves in a momentary peevishness of resentment against Florizel, — 'Will't please you, sir, be gone?'"

All having quitted the scene but Camillo and the lovers, Florizel tries to cheer his Perdita by protesting, "What I was, I am."

Camillo then interposes, reminding Florizel of his father's quick temper, and recommending him, till the storm is over, to keep out of his sight.

Poor Perdita pays little heed; but says: —

> How often have I told you 't would be thus, —
> How often said my dignity would last
> But till 't were known.

But Florizel, imploring her to "lift up her looks," makes his manly confession of an unaltered purpose before old Camillo.

> Camillo!
> Not for Bohemia, nor the pomp that may
> Be thereat gleaned; for all the sun sees
> Or the close earth wombs, or the profound seas hide
> In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
> To this my fair beloved. Therefore I pray you,
> As you have been my father's honored friend,
> When he shall miss me (as, in faith, I mean not
> To see him any more,) cast your good counsels
> Upon his passion. Let myself and fortune
> Tug for the time to come. This you may know
> And so deliver, — I am put to sea
> With her whom here I cannot hold on shore;
> And opportunely in our need, I have
> A ship that rides hard by, but not prepared
> For this design. What course I mean to hold
> Shall nothing benefit your knowledge, nor
> Concern me the reopening.

Florizel is justified in holding fast by Perdita in spite of his father's prohibition, that father having permitted him to betroth — or almost to betroth himself to her in his presence, and to receive her open avowal of her love. Camillo proposes they should make for Sicily, — Florizel presenting himself there under his own name, as ambassador for his

father. The old man has an unexpressed vague hope that Perdita may prove the lost daughter of his old master, — not hope enough to communicate, yet hope enough to frame his advice upon. Courtier-like he adds, —

> Besides, you know,
> Prosperity 's the very bond of love,
> Whose fresh complexion, and whose heart together
> Affliction alters.

Perdita replies with sincerity and her sweet wisdom : —

> One of these is true :
> I think affliction *may* subdue the cheek,
> But not take in the mind.

As Camillo and the young prince talk apart, Autolycus comes in. By peddling and by pickpocketing he has emptied nearly every purse at the sheep-shearing. He would have had them all, he says, but that his trade was stopped by the old man, "who came in with a whoo-bub against his daughter and the King's son."

Camillo perceiving Autolycus, and not imagining that he recognizes Prince Florizel, gets him to change clothes with the Prince. To Perdita these shifts and disguises are very painful, yet she subdues herself. She will not stand in the way of her lover's plans. She says, —

> I see the way so lies
> That I must bear a part.

"No remedy," replies Camillo.

When they are all gone away Autolycus debates whether to betray the Prince, "with his clog at his heels," — for so he designates sweet Perdita, — or keep his secret; and concludes that by doing the last he may "help forward the more knavery."

Temptation to the latter is at hand. As Autolycus reflects that "Every lane's end, every shop, session, or hanging, yields a careful man work," the shepherd and his son are deploring what has happened. Polixenes indeed had promised to spare the old man's life, but he had been too frightened to understand his words. The son argues that if the King is told that Perdita is no kin of theirs he will spare them. Having overheard their talk, Autolycus comes forward, and being in Florizel's clothes and without his false beard, he passes himself off on the two simple men for one of the king's courtiers. In this character he *commands* the pair to open their suit to him. The young man is greatly impressed by the new "advocate's" air, but the old man has more penetration, and says: "His garments are rich but he wears them not handsomely." Having learned that the matters that they wish to lay before the King are in a box and fardel, he proceeds to tell them that the king is not in the palace, he has taken ship under the influence of his grief, — and thence proceeds to discourse on the awful fate awaiting the shepherd whose daughter has aspired to wed the King's son. "Has the old man e'er a son, sir?" asks the young shepherd, trembling. And then Autolycus draws upon his invention for a list of most awful pains and penalties awaiting that unfortunate. He succeeds in getting large sums of money out of the terrified rustics to stand their friend, and promises to put them on board the King's vessel, — meaning really to embark them on that of the Prince. The last touch in the conversation, where Autolycus lingers behind to see what article he can steal from a hedge, is delightful.

ACT V. *Scene* 1.

The scene now shifts to Sicily, and we begin to pity old Leontes, childless and wifeless, penitent and desolate. To be sure, his penitence has a certain selfishness in it. We hear from him no grieving for the sorrows of Hermione. "The wrong I did myself" is the burden of his plaint; "my sweet'st companion" is the thing he mourns for.

Again we see Paulina's want of tact, her habit of bearing hard on the bruised reed.

Leontes. Whilst I remember
Her and her virtues, I cannot forget
My blemishes in them; and so still think of
The wrong I did myself, which was so much
That heirless it hath made my kingdom, and
Destroyed the sweet'st companion that e'er man
Bred his hopes out of.
Paulina. True, too true, my lord.
If one by one you wedded all the world,
Or from the all that are took something good
To make a perfect woman; she you killed
Would be unparalleled.
Leontes. I think so. Killed?
She that I killed? I did so, but thou strik'st me
Sorely to say I did. It is as bitter
Upon thy tongue as in my thought. Now, good now,
Say so but seldom.
Cleomenes. Not at all, good lady.
You might have spoken a thousand things that would
Have done the time more benefit, and graced
Your kindness better.

Many of Leontes' courtiers desire he should wed again, that the kingdom may, if possible, have an heir. There is good in the man at bottom, in spite of all his faults, for the people round him love and pity him. It is affecting where

Paulina's grief breaks out in little yearnings for her lost husband. She is strongly opposed, of course, to any plans for marrying Leontes, and easily induces him to swear that he will make no second choice till she provides a wife for him.

Then news comes that Prince Florizel of Bohemia, with his Princess have landed in Sicily. The gentleman who brings the news describes her as "the most peerless piece of earth, I think, that e'er the sun shone bright on." Paulina at once reproves him for seeming to forget the perfections of Queen Hermione. The gentleman excuses himself, and Paulina, whose heart is ever full of old remembrances, says:

> Had our Prince,
> Jewel of children, seen this hour, he had paired
> Well with this lord. There was not a full month
> Between his birth and that of Florizel.
> *Leontes.* Prithee, no more. Thou knowest
> He dies to me again when talked of. Sure,
> When I shall see this gentleman thy speeches
> Will bring me to consider that which may
> Unfurnish me of reason.

Here Florizel and Perdita are introduced. Florizel makes up a little fiction of his imaginary adventures, and Leontes listens, divided between feelings of remorse, interest in the story, the desire to show hospitality to Polixenes' son, and admiration of Perdita. But Perdita's love of truth, which mingles with her picturesque delicacy a certain firmness and dignity, makes her unable in this interview to utter a word. In the strait in which they are placed she cannot deny the story Florizel relates; she will not confirm it. Her silence, in spite of all the compliments and greetings of Leontes, has a peculiar and characteristic grace, and at the conclusion of

the scene, when they are betrayed, the truth bursts from her as if instinctively, and she exclaims with emotion, —

> The heavens set spies upon us! — will not have
> Our nuptials celebrated!

For a messenger from Polixenes has entered to denounce the runaways. That monarch, with Camillo, has put to sea in chase, has landed in Sicily, and fallen in with the two shepherds. During the voyage the foster-father and brother of Perdita have had no chance to communicate with Florizel, though in the same ship with him; indeed, they may have thought their errand was only to the King, his father. Before him at the first chance they open their "fardel."

Scene 2.

Here is the account, that a gentleman, deceived by Autolycus' rich clothes, gave to him.

1 *Gent.* I was by at the opening of the fardel, heard the old shepherd deliver how he found it, whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all commanded out of the chamber; only this, methought I heard the shepherd say he found the child. . . . But the changes I perceived in the King (Polixenes) and Camillo were very notes of admiration; they seemed almost with staring at each other to tear the cases of their eyes. There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture. . . .

2 *Gent.* [*entering*]. Nothing but bonfires! The oracle is fulfilled. The King's daughter is found. Such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it.

3 *Gent.* Did you see the meeting of the two Kings?

2 *Gent.* No.

3 *Gent.* Then you have lost a sight which was to be seen — cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one joy crown another; so and in such manner that their joy waded in tears. Our King being ready to leap out of himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries "O, thy mother, thy mother!" then

asks Bohemia forgiveness, then embraces his son-in-law, then again worries he his daughter with caressing her, now he thanks the old shepherd, which stands by like a weather-beaten conduit of many kings' reigns. . . . Then, O! the noble combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was wrought in Paulina! She had one eye cast down for the loss of her husband, the other elevated that the oracle was fulfilled. She lifted up the Princess from the earth, and so locks her in embracing as if she would pin her to her heart, that she might be no more in danger of losing. But one of the prettiest touches of all was when at the relation of the Queen's death, with the manner how she came to it, bravely confessed and lamented by the King, how attentiveness wounded his daughter, till from one sign of dolor to another, she did with an "alas!" I would fain say, bleed tears, for I am sure my heart wept blood.

This scene is followed by a soliloquy in which Autolycus laments that he had not discovered the secret and revealed it to the Kings of Sicily and Bohemia. He comforts himself, however, by the reflection that his loss of character would have stood in the way of his court preferment. At this moment the shepherd and his son come in, spoilt, alas! (though let us hope only for a time) by their new honors. The scene is very amusing, and yet for human nature's sake we find it painful. The young shepherd boasts that he has been a gentleman born these four hours, — that he was a gentleman born before his father, that the King's son took him by the hand and called him brother, then the two Kings had called his father brother; then the Prince, his brother, and the Princess, his sister, called his father, father. "And so we wept," he adds, "and these were the first gentleman-like tears we ever shed."

Scene 3.

We like Leontes now for the appreciation he shows of Paulina. The statue she has invited him and all his court to

see is a painted statue, — frequent among the Greeks and not uncommon in the Middle Ages. This one, she says, is a masterpiece, a statue of Hermione painted by Julio Romano. You will notice that Hermione and Paulina, being such different women, are never brought together till this scene. The scene is in Paulina's house, with the court and all the *dramatis personæ* assembled.

Leontes. O grave and good Paulina, the great comfort
That I have had of thee!
Paulina. What, sovereign sir,
I did not well, I meant well.
Leontes. O Paulina, we came to see the statue
Of our queen. But we have seen not
That which my daughter came to look upon,
The statue of her mother.
Paulina. But here it is. Prepare
To see the life as lively mocked as ever
Still sleep mocked death. Behold, and say 't is well.
Leontes. Her natural posture!
Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed
Thou art Hermione. Or rather, thou art she
In thy not chiding; for she was as tender
As infancy and grace. But yet, Paulina,
Hermione was not so much wrinkled, nothing
So aged as this seems.
Polixenes. O, not by much!
Leontes. . . . O! thus she stood . . . when first I wooed her!
I am ashamed. Does not the stone rebuke me
For being more stone than it? O! royal piece,
There 's magic in thy majesty, which has
My evils conjured to remembrance; and
From thine admiring daughter ta'en the spirits,
Standing like stone before thee!
Perdita. And give me leave,
And do not say 't is superstition, that
I kneel and then implore her blessing. Lady,
Dear Queen, that ended when I but began,
Give me that hand of yours to kiss.

Paulina. O, patience!
The statue is but newly fixed, the color 's
Not yet dry.

Perdita in this scene says very little; but she stands, as we have heard her father say, gazing on the statue of her mother, fixed in wonder, admiration, sorrow. It is Hermione's consistent self-restraint that enables her to go through the statue scene, though several times Paulina is on the point of drawing the curtain before her, — dreading her emotion. Hermione was the daughter of an emperor of Russia. In Elizabeth's time the first English embassy was sent to the Russian court, where Sir Thomas Randolph was entertained with barbaric splendors by Ivan the Terrible. But Hermione has none of the characteristics of a Russian woman. Russian women are sensuous and passionate to a high degree.

"The statue scene" says Mrs. Jameson, "is not only one of the most picturesque and striking instances of stage effect to be found in the ancient or modern drama, but by the skilful manner in which it is prepared it has (wonderful as it appears) all the merit of consistency and truth. The grief, the love, the remorse, the impatience of Leontes, are finely contrasted with the astonishment and admiration of Perdita, who, gazing on the statue of her mother as one entranced, looks as if she also were turned to marble. There is one little instance of tender remembrance in Leontes which adds to the charming impression of Hermione's character: —

Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed
Thou art Hermione. Or rather, thou art she
In thy not chiding; for she was as tender
As infancy or grace.

And again: —

> Thus she stood,
> E'en with such life of majesty — warm life,
> As now it coldly stands — when first I wooed her.

The effect produced on the different persons of the drama by this living statue, — an effect which at the same moment is and is not illusion; the manner in which the feelings of the spectators become entangled between the conviction of death and the impression of life; the idea of a deception, and the feeling of a reality; and the exquisite coloring of poetry and touches of natural feeling with which the whole is wrought up, till wonder, expectation, and intense pleasure hold our pulse and breath suspended on the event, — are quite inimitable."

Then comes the close. Paulina, who is speaking when Hermione descends from her pedestal, continues her speech. Hermione had held her hands out. Leontes, in his awe, had shrunk from her. Paulina says to him: —

> Start not: her actions shall be holy as,
> You hear, my spell is lawful. Do not shun her,
> Until you see her die again; for then
> You kill her double. Nay, present your hand;
> When she was young you wooed her, now in age
> Is she become the suitor.
> *Leontes* [*embracing her*]. O, she 's warm!
> If this be magic, let it be an art
> Lawful as eating.
> *Polixenes.* She embraces him!
> *Camillo.* She hangs about his neck!
> If she pertain to life let her speak too.
> *Paulina.* It appears she lives,
> Although she speaks not. Mark a little while —
> [*To Perdita.*] Please you to interpose, fair madam. Kneel

And pray your mother's blessing. Turn, good lady;
Our Perdita is found.
Hermione. You gods, look down,
And from your sacred vials pour your graces
Upon my daughter's head! Tell me, mine own,
Where hast thou been preserved? — where lived? — how found
Thy father's court? For thou shalt hear that I —
Knowing by Paulina that the oracle
Gave hope thou wast in being — have preserved
Myself to see the issue.

Mrs. Jameson says: "The moment when Hermione descends from her pedestal, to the sound of soft music, and throws herself without speaking into her husband's arms is one of inexpressible interest."

"It appears to me," she adds, "that her silence during this whole scene (except where she invokes a blessing on her daughter's head) is in the finest taste as poetical beauty, besides being an admirable trait of character. The misfortunes of Hermione, her long religious seclusion, the wonderful and almost supernatural part she has just enacted, have invested her with such a sacred and awful charm that any words put into her mouth must I think have injured the solemn and profound pathos of the situation."

Observe that after she descends from the pedestal Polixenes addresses neither her nor Leontes. Before she stirs he has been forward to comfort her husband. As they turn away, neither she nor Polixenes will cast a glance at the other. Leontes observes it, and exclaims: —

What? Look upon my brother: both your pardons,
That e'er I put between your holy looks
My ill suspicion.

The only heavy heart is poor Paulina's. She had evidently cherished the hope that when the princess was

restored according to the oracle, her husband might come back to her. Now she says: —

> Go together,
> You precious winners all; your exaltation
> Partake with every one. I, an old turtle,
> Will wing me to some withered bough, and there
> My mate, that 's never to be found again,
> Lament till I am lost.

I hardly think it could be any present consolation that royalty provides her with a husband in Camillo; but let us hope she was the happier for it in the long run.

THE TEMPEST.

THE TEMPEST.

"THE TEMPEST" is usually placed first in our editions of Shakspeare, but it is really in all probability one of the last of his plays.

The first representation of "The Tempest" was in 1613. It was one of the novelties produced during the rejoicings over the marriage of the good and beautiful Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of King James, with Frederick, the Elector Palatine. Among the various absurd comments of commentators is one which finds in Prospero King James himself, in Miranda Elizabeth, in Ferdinand the Elector Palatine, and in Caliban the new Province of Virginia!

For many years commentators could not imagine where Shakspeare got his story of "The Tempest." For he never invented plots; he took material from a ballad, from history, or from some old story-book, and inspired it. His characters are all his own, his plots never. At last an old German play turned up, — "Die Schöne Sidea;" and it was also discovered that in 1612 some of Shakspeare's friends and fellow-actors went over to Germany on a professional visit, and were at Nuremburg when the "Schöne Sidea" was performed. Germany and England were at that day far more in sympathy than they have been at any time since Elizabeth Stuart's great-grandson came to the English throne.

The author of "The Fair Sidea," Jacob Ayrer, died in 1605, and the points of resemblance are close between the two dramas. Ludolph is Ayrer's Prospero, Sidea his Miranda; Ludolph and Sidea live apart in a desert place (not on an uninhabited island), and are served by two spirits, Runciter and Molitor, the latter of whom is coarse and brutal, like Caliban. By help of Runciter (Ariel) a handsome young prince, Engelbrecht, and the Sage's hereditary enemy, are delivered into his power. The story proceeds as in "The Tempest," even to the carrying of the wood; but all the glow and poetry and grace and loveliness are Shakspeare's own. "'The Tempest' is one of those works for which no previous production of the author could have prepared the reader; it is of a wholly different cast of temper from what is conspicuous in his gayer comedies. It is solemn and grand, unrivalled in harmony and grace, and in grave beauty." The other fairy drama, "The Midsummer Night's Dream," is essentially different from "The Tempest," being indeed a contrast rather than a counterpart. "The one is all joy and sparkle and brilliancy; the other is poetry pervaded by philosophy." The one has been compared to spring, the other to the Indian summer. "The Tempest," though not rising as high as some of the tragedies, is perhaps Shakspeare's most perfect work of art. Hazlitt says of it: "The human and imaginary characters, the dramatic and the grotesque, are blended together with the greatest art. As the preternatural part has the air of reality, and haunts the imagination with a sense of truth, the real characters and events partake of the wildness of a dream."

If not, as it probably is, Shakspeare's latest work, it is at least one of the four last, — the others being "The Winter's Tale," "Cymbeline," and "Coriolanus."

We all know the story of "The Tempest," — how Prospero, Duke of Milan, was a dreamer, given over to scientific studies, which included (even in Shakspeare's day) alchemy and astrology. Antonio, his wicked brother, having secured the connivance of the King of Naples by an engagement to submit Milan to his suzerainship, making it a fief of the Neapolitan crown, succeeded, while Prospero remained blind to his proceedings, in winning the hearts of the Milanese people, and effecting a revolution. Prospero and his little daughter were put afloat in a leaky boat to perish in the first tempest that assailed them; but Gonzalo, a good old councillor, supplied them with books, garments, and provisions. Father and child landed on an island, — probably a desert island (if we must place it geographically) in the Mediterranean. The description of the island is taken partly from a pamphlet by a Virginian adventurer, who lived in Blackfriars, near Shakspeare's theatre. It was published in 1612, and is called "A true repertory of the wracke and redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Knight, upon and from the Islands of the Bermudas; his comeing to Virginia, and the state of the Colonie there, and after, under the Government of the Lord de la Warre. July 15. 1610. Written by William Strachey Esquire."

In the island they found two spirits, — the one all sloth, earthliness, and sensuality; the other all that was airy, graceful, tender; one with the power to hate, the other with *almost* the power to love, — by that I mean as high a power to love as can be possessed without a soul.

Caliban was son of the witch Sycorax, who worshipped a god, Setebos, on whom a poem has been written by Mr. Browning.

Ariel, the spirit of the island when Sycorax landed upon it, was imprisoned by her in a cleft tree, and released by Prospero.

These beings wait on him and on his daughter. At first the new comers were disposed to be kind to Caliban, but the devil in him getting the upper hand, he offered violence and insult to Miranda, after which he was kept down in his place with an almost cruel hand. This made him ripe for revolution. It has always seemed to me that Caliban, dangerous, vicious, with sufficient suffering to excuse himself in his own eyes for his desire to retaliate, was the Mob incarnate.

At last, after a lapse of about twelve years, a ship containing the King of Naples, on his way from Tunis, where he had married his daughter to a Moorish prince, is driven by stress of weather near the enchanted island. Prospero, who sees the laboring vessel has on board, besides the King of Naples (now Milan's feudal chief), his brother Antonio, old Gonzalo, and young Prince Ferdinand, the heir of Naples, directs Ariel to raise a tempest, to make the ship founder off shore, and bring her passengers safe into his power. Here the play opens.

ACT I. *Scene* 1.

You are aware that in Shakspeare's time there was no stage scenery. So, on a board, when the tempest was represented, was chalked up: "*On a Ship at sea. A storm, with thunder and lightning.*" The captain, the boatswain, and the sailors, come tumbling up on deck. All is hurry and confusion. To their amazement, they find themselves among breakers. The honest boatswain whistles shrilly with his silver whistle, and gives a multitude of orders, striving to keep up the hearts of his men, when up the companion-way comes, what a sailor dreads

most in foul weather, a meddlesome crowd of passengers. The King of Naples and his courtiers address the boatswain, forgetting that on board-ship in a storm ranks are reversed; the real king at such moments is he who commands the shipmen. The boatswain very shortly orders them all below. In a storm he respects no man. His rough absorption in his duty, and the vain efforts of the courtiers to make him show some respect to the King he has on board, are marvellously true to nature. My sympathy is all for the boatswain, though even the good Gonzalo cannot take a sailor's view of the subject, and thinks he deserves hanging; indeed, he makes a little joke on the subject, to keep up the spirits of his companions. But as the storm grows worse, and more courtiers come on deck, increasing the confusion and bothering the sailors, the boatswain gets more and more exasperated, and Sebastian and Antonio, the bad men of the drama, grow coarsely abusive. It is the sailors, not the landsmen, who first cry to prayers. Gonzalo keeps on reiterating his little joke about the boatswain being born to be hanged, to call off the attention of the courtiers. It has been his office for so many years to be a go-between and peace-maker, that even in the presence of death the passion for directing away the intentions of the wicked from evil is strong within him.

The subsequent exclamations, after the direction "*a confused noise within*," are, I think, the cries of other passengers in the cabin, and no part of the speech spoken by old Gonzalo.

Scene 2.

In this scene, before the cave that serves Prospero for his study, we are introduced to Miranda. Miranda's character is composed of the simplest elements of ideal womanhood;

she is beautiful, modest, and tender. These elements comprise her whole character, — she is these alone. Brought up with no mother, with no knowledge of persons of her own sex, she knows nothing of the conventional rules of society; she is the brightest possible ideal of a child of nature, — not rude, ignorant nature, but nature with some intellectual cultivation. She knows nothing that should prevent her carrying wood for a human being who is weary; she has no conventionalities of princesshood, nor traditions of a lady; she is "pure womanly," but has native dignity, and an intuitive sense of all that is most proper, while guided chiefly by her sense of what is kind.

"Miranda," says Mrs. Jameson, "possesses the merely elementary attributes of womanhood, but each of these stands out in her with a distinct grace. She resembles nothing upon earth, and yet we never compare her with dryads or sea-maids, or such creatures of the fancy. Miranda is a consistent, natural human being. Our impression of her nymph-like beauty, her peerless grace, and purity of soul, has a distinct and individual character. Not only is she exquisitely lovely, being what she is, but we are made to feel she *could* not possibly be otherwise than as she is portrayed. She has never beheld one of her own sex," — although one of her first speeches is in defence of that sex, which she knew only through history or poetry; but Coleridge says, in effect, that a sense of ancestry and maternity are strong instincts in untutored womanhood. "She has never caught from society one imitated or one artificial grace. The impulses which have come to her enchanted solitude are of heaven and nature, not of the world and its vanities. She has sprung up into

beauty beneath the eye of her father, the princely magician. Her companions have been the rocks and woods, the many-tinted clouds, the silent stars; Ariel and his attendant spirits hovered over her, ministering duteous to her every wish, and presented before her pageants of beauty and grandeur. The very air, made vocal by her father's art, floated in music round her. She retains her woman's heart, for that is unalterable, inalienable, as part of her being; but her deportment, her looks, her language, her thoughts, — these, from the supernatural and poetical circumstances around her, assume a cast of the pure ideal. All who approach her seem to see in her something celestial." In this scene in which she comes before us first we see her anxiety, sorrow, and uneasiness, the first time that she is brought face to face with others' suffering, — "suffering with those whom she saw suffer." When her father goes on to tell her of her own lost inheritance, the secret of her life, of their exile, of all that we should suppose would have been most interesting to her, he can hardly keep her attention, so anxiously is she watching for some confirmation of his assurance that the poor souls that she has seen sink in the beautiful great ship are safe on land. Only once is her soul moved during his tale, — when she thinks what trouble she must have been in her infant helplessness to her poor father. She does not sit down quietly to hear his tale till he commands her, and at every pause he has to ask if she is really listening. Coleridge remarks that Prospero's speeches in this scene are the finest examples he remembers of "retrospective narrative, told for the purpose of exciting immediate interest and putting the audience in possession of all the information necessary for understanding the plot."

Miranda. If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O! I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer, — a brave vessel,
Who had no doubt some noble creatures in her,
Dashed all to pieces! O! their cry did knock
Against my very heart. Poor souls! they perished.
Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth or e'er
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and
The freighting souls within her.
Prospero. Be collected.
No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart
There 's no harm done
Miranda. O! woe the day.
Prospero. No harm.

Then he goes on, often pausing to comfort her and reassure her, to tell her their sad history. Before he does so he takes off his magic garment, and speaks only in the character of an exiled prince and father.

After questioning his daughter concerning the earliest recollections of her infancy, he proceeds: —

Twelve years since,
Miranda, twelve years since, thy father was
The Duke of Milan, — thou, his only heir,
A princess; no worse issued.
Miranda. O, the heavens!
What foul play had we, that we came from thence? —
Or blest was it we did?
Prospero. Both, both, my girl.
By foul play, as thou say'st, were we heaved thence,
But blessedly holp hither.
Miranda. O! my heart bleeds
To think of the teen that I have turned you to,
Which is from my remembrance.

Prospero proceeds with his narrative, but ever and anon her attention is distracted by distant sounds. She fancies that she hears the cries of the poor creatures she had seen engulfed, or something that confirms her father's assurance of their safety.

When he tells her, however, how in the dead of darkness the ministers of Antonio hurried to the strand "me and thy crying self," her attention is fully roused, and she exclaims:

> Alack, for pity!
> I, not remembering how I cried out then,
> Will cry it o'er again.

When he tells her of the pity and kind thoughtfulness of good Gonzalo she exclaims: —

> Would I might
> But ever see that man!

"Alack! what trouble was I then to you!" is her thought throughout, and Prospero's answer is: "O! a cherubim, that did preserve me!"

And then at last he gives his reasons "for raising this sea-storm."

> *Prospero.* Know thus far forth:
> By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,
> Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies
> Brought to this shore; and by my prescience
> I find my zenith doth depend upon
> A most conspicuous star; whose influence
> If now I court not but omit, my fortune
> Will ever after droop. Here cease thy questions.

And thus having told Miranda all that he thinks fit, he lays a sleep-spell on her, and summons Ariel. For the passage in which Ariel describes the shipwreck Shakspeare is

supposed to have received some hints from Ariosto in Ruggiero's shipwreck, and some from Strachey's "Narrative," which has much to say about the St. Hermus light, the death-fears of the sailors off Bermuda, etc. I am very sure Shakspeare had read Ariosto, either in the original or in the translation made by Sir John Harrington at the command of Queen Elizabeth.

Ariel also makes allusion to Bermuda as a little group of enchanted isles. He says: —

> Thou calledst me up at midnight to fetch dew
> From the still vexed Bermoothes.

Ariel has fulfilled his lord's commands by dispersing sailors and passengers about the island. Prospero seems in this scene a little stern with his sweet airy spirit, but I suppose with soulless beings it was necessary to keep them well in subjection. "Ariel," says Coleridge, "has in everything the airy tint that gives his name. Miranda is never brought into comparison with Ariel, lest the natural and human of the one, and the supernatural of the other, should tend to neutralize each other. Caliban, on the other hand, is all earth and condensed 'brutishness.' He has the dawnings of understanding without moral sense, and in him, as in some brute animals (or more notably in savages), this advance to intellectual faculties without moral sense is marked by the appearance of vice." Caliban has a case which he can make out against Prospero, and yet we feel, and know, that Prospero is in the right, and that nothing but threats and brute force will keep him or his daughter, in their intercourse with Caliban, in safety. Still, a philanthropist might have taken up the cause of the "poor monster."

Caliban being gone to carry wood, Ariel re-enters, singing, and drawing after him Prince Ferdinand. The song is one of the loveliest of Shakspeare's lyrics. Whenever he writes a song there is music in the words.

Come unto these yellow sands,
And there take hands.
Courtesied when you have, and kissed
(The wild waves whist),
Foot it featly here and there,
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.
Hark! Hark!
[*Bur.*] Bow-wow.
The watch dogs bark;
[*Bur.*] Bow-wow.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer,
Cry, Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Ferdinand. Where should this music be? I' the air —
Or on the earth? It sounds no more, and sure
It waits upon some god o' the island.
Sitting on a bank,
Weeping again the king my father's wreck,
This music crept by me upon the waters, —
Allaying both their fury and my passion
With its sweet air. Thence I have followed it,
Or it hath drawn me, rather. . . . But 't is gone.
No! it begins again.

Ariel. Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange;
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell;
Hark! now I hear them — ding-dong bell!

Ferdinand. The ditty does remember my drowned father;
This is no mortal business, nor no sound
That the earth owns. I hear it now above me.

Thus impressed by the idea that he may be surrounded by the local divinities of the island, Ferdinand stands without the cave, while within Prospero wakes Miranda, and notes the effect of the first man she sees upon her. Then suddenly Ferdinand catches sight of Miranda, and doubting whether she be woman or spirit or goddess, kneels and addresses her as "O you wonder!" — asking if she "be maid or no." Miranda replies, "No wonder, sir, but certainly a maid." Hearing her speak his own tongue, Ferdinand hastens to intimate his rank. His genuine grief for his father, and regret at his own elevation to the throne, are in marked contrast with the subsequently expressed feelings of Sebastian and Antonio on the same subject, and predispose us at once in favor of the young man. The whole scene is very beautiful, too beautiful to be omitted.

Prospero [*within the cave, to Miranda*]. The fringed curtains of
thine eyes advance,
And say what seest thou yonder?
Miranda. What is 't? — a spirit?
Lord! how it looks about! Believe me, sir,
It carries a brave form. But is 't a spirit?
Prospero. No, girl; it eats and sleeps, and hath such senses
As we have — such. This gallant whom thou seest
Was in the wreck; and, but he 's something stained
With grief that 's beauty's canker, thou might'st call him
A goodly person. He hath lost his fellows,
And strays about to find them.
Miranda. I might call him
A thing divine; for nothing natural
I ever saw so noble.
Prospero [*aside, as he goes apart*]. It goes on
As my soul prompts it. Spirit, fine spirit,
I 'll free thee within two days for this.
Ferdinand [*seeing Miranda*]. Most sure, the goddess
On whom these airs attend! [*Kneels.*] Vouchsafe my prayer
May know if you remain upon this island;

And that you will some good instruction give
How I may bear me here. My prime request,
Which I do last pronounce, is, O you wonder!
If you be maid or no?
Miranda. No wonder, sir;
But certainly a maid.
Ferdinand [*rising*]. My language? Heavens! —
I am the best of them that speak this speech,
Were I but where 't is spoken.
Prospero [*coming forward*]. How! — the best?
What wert thou if the King of Naples heard thee?
Ferdinand. A single thing, as I am now, that wonders
To hear thee speak of Naples. He *does* hear me,
And, that he *does*, I weep. Myself am Naples,
Who with mine eyes, ne'er since at ebb, beheld
The king my father wrecked.
Miranda. Alack, for mercy!
Ferdinand. Yes, faith, and all his lords, — the Duke of Milan
And his brave son being twain.
Prospero. The Duke of Milan
And his more braver daughter could control thee
If now 't were fit to do it.
[*Aside.*] At the first sight
They have changed eyes. Delicate Ariel,
I 'll set thee free for this.
[*Aloud to Ferdinand.*] A word, good sir;
I fear you have done yourself some wrong; a word.
Miranda. Why speaks my father so ungently? This
Is the third man that e'er I saw; — the first
That e'er I sighed for. Pity move my father
To be inclined my way!
Ferdinand. O! if a virgin,
And your affection not gone forth, I 'll make you
The Queen of Naples!
Prospero. Soft, sir; one word more.
[*Aside.*] They are both in either's powers; but this swift business
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
Make the prize light.
[*To Ferdinand.*] One word more; I charge thee
That thou attend me. Thou dost here usurp

The name thou own'st not; and hast put thyself
Upon this island as a spy, to win it
From me, the lord on't.
Ferdinand. No! as I am a man.
Miranda [*pleading*]. There 's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple.
If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
Good things will strive to dwell in 't.
Prospero [*to Ferdinand*]. Follow me! —
[*To Miranda.*] Speak not you for him; he 's a traitor.
[*To Ferdinand.*] I 'll manacle thy neck and feet together;
Sea-water shalt thou drink; thy food shall be
The fresh-brook muscles, withered roots, and husks
Wherein the acorn cradled. Follow!
Ferdinand. No!
I will resist such entertainment, till
Mine enemy has more power. [*Draws his sword.*]
Miranda. O! dear father,
Make not too rash a trial of him, for
He 's gentle, and not fearful.
Prospero. What, I say, —
My foot my tutor!
[*Paralyzes his arm.*] Put thy sword up, traitor,
Who mak'st a show, but dar'st not strike, thy conscience
Is so possessed by guilt. Come from thy ward;
For I can here disarm thee with this stick,
And make thy weapon drop.
Miranda. Beseech you, father!
Prospero. Hence! hang not on my garments!
Miranda. Sir, have pity.
I 'll be his surety!
Prospero. Silence! one word more
Shall make me chide thee, if not hate thee. What!
An advocate for an impostor? Hush!
Thou think'st there are no more such shapes as he, —
Having seen but him and Caliban. Foolish wench!
To most of men this is a Caliban,
And they to him are angels.
Miranda. My affections
Are then most humble. I have no ambition
To see a goodlier man.

Prospero [*to Ferdinand*]. Come on; obey.
Thy nerves are in their infancy again,
And have no vigor in them.
Ferdinand. So they are.
My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.
My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,
The wreck of all my friends, or this man's threats
By which I am subdued, are but light to me
Might I but through my prison once a day
Behold this maid. All corners else o' the earth
Let liberty make use of; space enough
Have I in such a prison.
Prospero [*aside*]. It works. [*To Ferdinand.*] Come on.
[*Aside to Ariel.*] Thou hast done well, my Ariel.
[*To Ferd. and Mir.*] Follow me!
[*Aside to Ariel.*] Hark, what thou else shalt do me.
Miranda [*to Ferdinand*]. Be of comfort,
My father 's of a better nature, sir,
Than he appears by speech. This is unwonted
Which now came from him.
Prospero [*to Ariel*]. Thou shalt be as free
As mountain winds; but then exactly do
All points of my command.
Ariel. To the syllable.
Prospero [*to Mir.*]. Come, follow! speak not for him.

Prospero has spoken roughly to the youth, and the pity akin to love is roused in sweet Miranda. Prospero, reflecting truly that there is danger in light winning, has made believe to abuse and insult Ferdinand, who draws his sword; but Prospero, lifting up his wand, paralyzes his arm, — Miranda, meantime, hanging on the skirts of her father's magic robe, and entreating him for pity. Prospero silences her peremptorily; but, even then, her dawning love for Ferdinand, combining with her sense of justice and her pity, make her hold firmly to her point, though all she can do is to whisper to Ferdinand that her father is of better nature

than he appears by speech, and that his conduct is "unwonted."

ACT II. *Scene* 1.

Here we are introduced to a new set of characters, — Alonzo, King of Naples; Sebastian, his wicked brother; Antonio, the coarse, bad brother of Prospero; good old Gonzalo; Francisco, a young nobleman, — possibly the brave young cousin of Miranda, — and Adrian.

Gonzalo, ever bent upon his task of turning other people's thoughts away from their own troubles, or from designs of iniquity, implores his master to look on the bright side, and to be thankful for his preservation. The bereaved man — for the father of Ferdinand believes his son is drowned — will not listen to his kind old councillor, of whom the heartless courtiers make fun. Indeed, Sebastian and Antonio are in high spirits; for if Ferdinand be dead, Sebastian may be considered the next heir to Naples. Then Adrian tries, as it were, to second old Gonzalo, not very wisely perhaps, (few consolatory speeches *are* wise), and Sebastian and Antonio find more matter for mirth. The comforters' speeches, however, are rather made with the kind intention of diverting their master's thoughts, and drawing his attention to the beauties of the enchanted island, than to offer balm to his wound. The whole scene is more pathetic than comic; the efforts of Gonzalo, Adrian, and Francisco, are so piteously persevering and unavailing.

Then breaks in Sebastian, with a brutal "I told you so!" to his brother, and makes the worst of the bad business, — as Gonzalo tells him, "rubbing the sore where you should bring the plaster." Here, by way of diverting his master's thoughts, Gonzalo applies to the imaginary government of

the desert isle a passage translated from Montaigne's Essays. Notice, too, how amiably Gonzalo takes the failure of his efforts, — with the unselfishness of a man bent wholly on a charitable purpose.

It is always interesting to me to look closely into what one may call the minor scenes of Shakspeare's plays, and see how carefully he discriminates his less important characters.

The joking, gibing, and consoling are interrupted by Ariel and his spirits playing solemn music, which puts to sleep Gonzalo, Adrian, and Francisco, leaving the two bad men alone with their King. Soon he becomes drowsy, and they remain awake to plot against his life. "The scene of the intended assassination of Alonzo," says Coleridge, "is the exact counterpart of the scene between Macbeth and his lady, only pitched in a lower key throughout, as designed to be frustrated and concealed, and exhibiting the same profound management in the manner of familiarizing a mind not immediately recipient, to the suggestion of guilt, by associating the proposed crime with something ludicrous, or out of place, — something not habitually matter of reverence. By this kind of sophistry the imagination and fancy are first bribed to contemplate the suggested act, and at length to become acquainted with it."

The two men Sebastian and Antonio are about to kill the King of Naples and Gonzalo, when Ariel, sent by Prospero, wakens the latter, who perceives the conspirators with drawn swords in their hands. They make plausible excuses, and Gonzalo, too good himself to cherish suspicion, is persuaded that strange noises have been heard in the enchanted island. Therefore, refreshed by sleep, and with their swords drawn, they all set out to make further search for Ferdinand.

Scene 2.

In this second scene we have Caliban, bearing logs of wood, ripe for rebellion against his master. As he grumbles, there enters Trinculo, the jester of the King of Naples. Hazlitt has remarked upon the entire absence of vulgarity in Caliban, in contrast with the sea-wit of the jester, butler, and sailors. He says: "Shakspeare has described the brutal mind of Caliban in contrast with the pure and original forms of nature; the character grows out of the soil where it is rooted, uncontrolled, uncouth, and wild, uncramped by any of the meannesses of custom; it is 'of the earth, earthy.' It seems almost to have been dug out of the ground, with mental powers instinctively superadded to it, answering to its wants and origin." Schlegel observes that Caliban is a poetical character, and always speaks in blank verse.

The part of Trinculo's speech which describes the English as eager to rush after any kind of monstrosity is still true to the letter. Soon after, enters Stephano, a drunken steward or butler, with a bottle in his hand. The whole scene speaks for itself. Note in it one touch which shows Miranda's kindness to her father's brutish servant, and another which proves that the jester was somewhat dwarfish.

Caliban. All the infections that the sun sucks up
From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall, and make him
By inch-meal a disease! His spirits hear me,
And yet I needs must curse. But they 'll not pinch,
Fright me with urchin shows, pitch me i' the mire,
Nor lead me, like a fire-brand in the dark,
Out of my way, unless he bid them. But
For every trifle are they set upon me;
Sometimes like apes, that mow and chatter at me,
And after bite me; then like hedge-hogs, which

Lie tumbling in my bare-foot way, and mount
Their pricks at my foot-fall. Sometimes am I
Wounded with adders, who, with cloven tongues,
Do hiss me into madness. Lo! now, lo! [*Enter Trinculo.*
Here comes a spirit of his, — and to torment me
For bringing wood in slowly. I'll fall flat;
Perchance he will not mind me.

Trinculo. Here's neither bush nor shrub to bear off any weather at all, and another storm brewing! I hear it sing i' the wind. If it should thunder as it did before, I know not where to hide my head. Yond' same cloud cannot choose but fall by pailfuls. What have we here? a man, or a fish? dead, or alive? A fish; he smells like a fish, — a very ancient and fish-like smell; a kind of (not of the newest) Poor-John. A strange fish! Were I in England now, — as once I was, — and had but this fish painted, not a holiday-fool there but would give a piece of silver. There would this monster *make* a man! When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian. Legged like a man! — and his fins like arms! Warm, o' my troth! I do now let loose my opinion, and hold it no longer; this is no fish, but an islander that hath lately suffered by a thunder-bolt. [*Thunder.*] Alas! the storm is come again; my best way is to creep under his gaberdine; there is no other shelter hereabout; misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows! I will here shroud till the drench of the storm be past.

[*Enter Stephano, singing, — a bottle in his hand.*]

Stephano. A very scurvy time to sing, at a man's funeral. Well, *here's* my comfort. [*Drinks.*]

Caliban. Do not torment me! Oh!

Stephano. What's the matter? Have we devils here? Do you put tricks upon us with savages and men of Ind? Ha! I have not escaped drowning to be afeard now of your four legs. [*Pulls at the legs.*]

Caliban. The spirit torments me! Oh!

Stephano. This is some monster of the isle, with four legs; who hath got, as I take it, an ague. Where the devil should he learn our language? I'll give him some relief, if it be but for that. If I can recover him, and keep him tame, and get to Naples with him, he is a present for any emperor that ever trod on neat's leather.

Caliban. Do not torment me, prithee!
I'll bring my wood home faster.

Stephano. He' s in his fit now, and does not talk after the wisest. He shall taste of my bottle. If he have never drunk wine before, it will go near to remove his fit. If I can recover him and keep him tame, he shall pay for him that hath him, and that soundly.

Caliban. Thou dost me yet but little hurt. Thou wilt anon,
I know it by thy trembling. Now Prosper works upon thee.

Stephano. Come on your ways! open your mouth! Here is that which will give language to you, cat! open your mouth! You cannot tell who 's your friend. Open your chaps again!

Trinculo. I should know that voice! It should be — but he 's drown'd, and these are devils. O! defend me! . . .

Stephano. Four legs, and two voices! — a most delicate monster! If all the wine in my bottle will recover him, I will help his ague. Come! — Amen. I will pour some in thine other mouth.

Trinculo. Stephano! —

Stephano. Doth thine other mouth call *me?* Mercy! Mercy! This is a devil, and no monster!

Trinculo. Stephano! — if thou beest Stephano, touch me, speak to me; for I am Trinculo. Be not afraid, — thy good friend Trinculo.

Stephano. If thou beest Trinculo, come forth. I 'll pull thee by the lesser legs. If any be Trinculo's legs, these are they. Thou art very Trinculo indeed. How camest thou to be the siege of that moon-calf?

Trinculo. I took him to be killed with a thunder-stroke. But art thou not drown'd, Stephano? I hope now thou art not drown'd. Is the storm over-blown? I hid me under the dead moon-calf's gaberdine for fear of the storm. And art thou living, Stephano? O Stephano, two Neapolitans 'scaped!

Stephano. Prithee, do not turn me about. My stomach is not constant.

Caliban. These be fine things, an' if they be not sprites.
That 's a brave god, — and bears celestial liquor.
I 'll kneel to him.

Stephano. How did'st thou 'scape? How cam'st thou hither? Swear by this bottle how thou cam'st hither. *I* escaped upon a butt of sack which the sailors heaved overboard, by this bottle! which I made of the bark of a tree, with my own hands since I was cast ashore.

Caliban. I 'll swear upon that bottle to be thy
True subject; for the liquor is not earthly.

Stephano [*to Trinculo*]. Here! swear, then, how thou escaped'st.

Trinculo. Swam ashore, man, like a duck; I can swim like a duck, I 'll be sworn.

Stephano. Here! kiss the book. Tho' thou canst swim like a duck, thou art made like a goose.

Trinculo. O Stephano, hast any more of this?

Stephano. The whole butt, man! My cellar is in a rock by the sea-side. How now, moon-calf? How does thine ague?

Caliban. Hast thou not dropped from heaven?

Stephano. Out of the moon, I do assure thee. I was the man i' the moon when time was.

Caliban. I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee.
My mistress showed me thee, thy dog, and bush.

Stephano. Come! swear to that. Kiss the book. I will furnish it anon with new contents. Swear!

Trinculo. By this good light, this is a very shallow monster. *I* afeard of him? — a very weak monster. The man i' the moon! — a most poor, credulous monster!

Caliban. I 'll show thee every fertile inch o' the island,
And kiss thy foot. I prithee, be my god.

Trinculo. By this light, a most perfidious and drunken monster! When his god 's asleep he 'll rob his bottle.

Caliban. I 'll kiss thy foot. I 'll swear myself thy subject.

Stephano. Come on, then; down, and swear!

Trinculo. I shall laugh myself to death at this puppy-headed monster. A most scurvy monster! I could find it in my heart to beat him —

Stephano. Come, kiss.

Trinculo. — but that the poor monster 's in drink. An abominable monster!

Caliban. I 'll show thee the best springs; I 'll pluck thee berries;
I 'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough.
A plague upon the tyrant that I serve!
I 'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee,
Thou wondrous man.

Trinculo. A most ridiculous monster! — to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!

Caliban. I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts,
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmozet. I 'll bring thee

To clustering filberts, and sometimes I 'll get thee
Young sea-mells from the rock. Wilt thou go with me?

Stephano. I prithee now, lead the way, without any more talking. Trinculo, the king and all our company else being drowned, we will inherit here. [*To Caliban.*] Here! bear my bottle! Fellow Trinculo, we 'll fill him by-and-by again.

Caliban [*sings drunkenly*]. Farewell, master; farewell, farewell.

Trinculo. A howling monster! A drunken monster!

Caliban. No more dams I 'll make for fish;
Nor fetch in firing
At requiring;
Nor scrape trencher, nor wash dish;
'Ban 'Ban Ca— Caliban
Has a new master, — get a new man!
Freedom! hey-day! freedom! freedom!

Stephano. O brave monster! lead the way.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

This scene between Ferdinand and Miranda is the great scene of the play. "In Ferdinand, who is a noble creature," says Mrs. Jameson, "we have all the chivalrous magnanimity with which man, in a high state of civilization, disguises his real superiority, and does humble homage to the being of whose destiny he disposes; while Miranda, the mere child of nature, is struck with wonder at her own new emotions. Only conscious of her weakness as a woman, and ignorant of those usages of society which teach us to dissemble the real passion, and assume, nay, sometimes abuse, an unreal and transient power, she is equally ready to place her life, her love, her service, at his feet."

"This courting scene," says Coleridge, "is a masterpiece; and the first dawn of disobedience in the mind of Miranda to the command of her father is very finely drawn, so as to seem the working of the Scriptural commandment: 'Thou shalt leave father and mother and cleave unto thy wife' — or

husband. Oh, with what exquisite purity this scene is conceived and executed! Shakspeare may sometimes be gross (according to his times) but I boldly say he is always moral and modest. Alas! in our day decency of manners is too often preserved at the expense of morality of heart."

The scene is before the cell of Prospero. Ferdinand enters, bearing a log.

Ferdinand. There be some sports are painful, but their labor
Delight in them sets off. Some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone, and most poor matters
Point to rich ends. This, my mean task, would be
As heavy to me as 't is odious, but
The mistress which I serve quickens what 's dead,
And makes my labors pleasures. O! she is
Ten times more gentle than her father 's crabbèd,
And he 's composed of harshness. I must remove
Some thousands of these logs, and pile them up,
Upon a sore injunction. My sweet mistress
Weeps when she sees me work, and says such baseness
Had ne'er like executor. — I forget;
But these sweet thoughts do e'en refresh my labors,
Most busy — blest when I do it.

[*Enter Miranda, — Prospero watching at a distance.*]

Miranda. Alas! now I pray you,
Work not so hard. I would the lightning had
Burnt up those logs that you 're enjoined to pile.
Pray set it down, and rest you. When this burns
'T will weep at having wearied you. My father
Is hard at study; rest yourself.
He 's safe for these three hours.

Ferdinand. O most dear mistress,
The sun will set before I shall discharge
What I must try to do.

Miranda. If you'll sit down,
I 'll bear your logs the while. Pray give me that;
I 'll carry it to the pile.

Ferdinand. No! precious creature,
I 'd rather crack my sinews, break my back,

Than you should such dishonor undergo,
While I sit lazy by.
Miranda. It would become me
As well as it does you, and I should do it
With much more ease, for my good-will is to it,
And yours against it.
Prospero [*aside*]. Poor worm, thou art infected;
This visitation shows it.
Miranda. You look wearily.
Ferdinand. No, noble mistress, 't is fresh morning with me
When you are by at night. I do beseech you,
Chiefly that I may set it in my prayers,
What is your name?
Miranda. Miranda, — O my father,
I have broke your hest to say so!
Ferdinand. Admired Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration, worth
What 's dearest in the world! Full many a lady
I have eyed with best regard, and many a time
The harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear. For several virtues
Have I liked several women; never any
With so full soul but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owned,
And put it to the foil. But you — O! you —
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best.
Miranda. I do not know
One of my sex; no woman's face remember,
Save from my glass mine own; nor have I seen
More that I may call men than you, good friend,
And my dear father. How features are abroad,
I am skill-less of; but by my modesty,
The jewel in my dower, I would not wish
Any companion in the world but you;
Nor can imagination form a shape,
Besides yourself, to like of. But I prattle
Something too wildly, and my father's precepts
Therein forget.
Ferdinand. I am in my condition
A prince, Miranda; I do think, a king, —

I would, not so! — and would no more endure
This wooden slavery than I would suffer
The flesh-fly blow my mouth. Hear my soul speak! —
The very instant that I saw you, did
My heart fly to your service; and for your sake
Am I this patient log-man.
Miranda. Do you love me?
Ferdinand. O heaven, O earth, bear witness to this sound,
And crown what I profess with kind event
If I speak true; if hollowly, invest
What best is boded me to mischief! I,
Beyond all limit of what else i' the world,
Do love, prize, honor you.
Miranda. I am a fool
To weep at what I 'm glad of.
Prospero [*aside*]. Fair encounter
Of two most rare affections. Heaven rain grace
On that which breeds between them!
Ferdinand. Wherefore weep you?
Miranda. At mine unworthiness, that dare not offer
What I desire to give, and much less take
What I shall die to want. But this is trifling;
And all the more it seeks to hide itself,
The bigger bulk it shows. Hence, bashful cunning!
And prompt me, plain and holy innocence!
I am your wife if you will marry me,
If not, I 'll die your maid. To be your fellow,
You may deny me; but I 'll be your servant,
Whether you will or no.
Ferdinand [*kneeling*]. My mistress, dearest,
And I thus humble ever.
Miranda. My husband, then?
Ferdinand. Ay, with a heart as willing
As bondage aye of freedom. Here 's my hand.
Miranda. And mine, with my heart in it. Now farewell.

Scene 2.

In this scene Stephano and Trinculo, prompted by Caliban, plan the destruction of Prospero. "In it," says Coleridge,

"the effect of the previous conspiracy scene (to murder Alonzo) is heightened by this counterpart in low life, in which are the same general characteristics. Here are also shown," he adds, "the springs of the vulgar in politics, — of that kind of politics interwoven in human nature. Note the good-humored way in which Shakspeare, indulgent to the passions and follies of a mob, describes Stephano passing from the most licentious freedom to absolute despotism over Trincùlo and Caliban." The three actors in the scene are all drunk, and drunkenness brings out each man's individual characteristics. Stephano is boastful. He swam five and thirty leagues, off and on, before he reached the island. Calibạn is abject, servile, full of spitefulness, — like a cross dog who snarls at every one but him whom he acknowledges to be his master. When Caliban complains of Trinculo, who has simply laughed at him, "King" Stephano says magniloquently: "Trinculo, keep a good tongue in your head. If you prove a mutineer — the next tree!"

Then Caliban makes his suit that they shall murder his late master, — Ariel, invisible, interrupting him; and some very funny by-play is made by the persuasion of Caliban and Stephano that it is Trinculo who disturbs them. The hatred evinced by the monster for Trinculo promises great discord in Stephano's new dominions. Here is what is said by Caliban: —

> As I told thee before,
> I am subject to a tyrant — a sorcerer —
> That by his cunning hath cheated me
> Of this island. . . .
> I say by sorcery he got this isle, —
> From me he got it. If thy greatness will,
> Revenge it on him, — for I know *thou* dar'st,
> But this thing dare not. . . .

Thou shalt be lord of it, and I 'll serve thee. . . .
I 'll yield him thee asleep
Where thou mayst knock a nail into his head.
For as I told thee, 't is a custom with him
I' the afternoon to sleep: there thou may'st brain him,
Having first seized his books; or with a log
Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake,
Or cut his weasand with thy knife. Remember
First to possess his books, for without them
He 's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
One spirit to command. They all do hate him
As rootedly as I. Burn but his books;
And that most deeply to consider is
The beauty of his daughter. He himself
Calls her a non-pareil. I ne'er saw woman,
But only Sycorax, my dam, and she;
But she as far surpasses Sycorax
As greatest does the least.

Stephano. Monster, I will kill this man. His daughter and I will be king and queen (save our Graces!); and Trinculo and thyself shall be viceroys. Dost thou like the plot, Trinculo?

Trinculo. Excellent.

Stephano. Give me thy hand. I am sorry I beat thee, but then while thou livest keep a good tongue in thy head.

Again, when the jester and butler are frightened out of their wits by the music of Ariel in the air, Caliban reassures them by his superior knowledge: —

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hunt about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
That if I then had waked after long sleep
Would make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open and shew riches
Ready to drop upon me, — that when I waked
I cried to dream again.

Stephano. This will prove a brave kingdom to me,
Where I shall have my music for nothing.

Caliban. When Prospero is destroyed.

We may remark the absence of profanity in these speeches of the drunken sailors. Shakspeare did not feel it necessary to shock the ears of his audience by the realism of oaths and curses. But, as Hazlitt remarks, "from Caliban have been drawn off the elements of whatever is ethereal and refined, to compound them in the unearthly mould of Ariel."

Scene 3.

Here we again see the King of Naples and his party, searching for Prince Ferdinand. Poor old Gonzalo is wearied out. The King, now that his old comforter has ceased to play Mark Tapley, loses heart also. The conspirators whisper together. Then comes soft music, and spirits by order of Prospero bring in a banquet. The good see in it the hand and the protection of heaven; the bad make a mock at it. Alonzo declines to eat, and good Gonzalo, leaning tenderly over him, tries to persuade him, reminding him of tales of their youth.

Then Ariel, who is "the swiftness of thought personified," says Hazlitt, bears off the feast, and denounces the wicked. Two of them, the King and Sebastian, are overwhelmed by a sense of their past guilt. Antonio, impenitent, becomes desperate. Sebastian, Antonio, and Alonzo rush from the spot where their sin has found them out, and Gonzalo and the younger courtiers follow them.

ACT IV. *Scene* 1.

This scene is before Prospero's cell. The trial of Ferdinand is over; the father of Miranda has accepted him as her suitor, and thus speaks to him: —

> If I have too austerely punished you,
> Your compensation makes amends; for I

Have given you here a thread of my own life,
Or that for which I live ; whom once again
I tender to thy hand. All thy vexations
Were but my trial of thy love, and thou
Hast strangely stood the test. Here, afore Heaven,
I ratify this my rich gift. O Ferdinand,
Do not smile at me that I boast her off,
For thou wilt find she will outstrip all praise
And make it halt behind her.
Ferdinand. I do believe it
Against an oracle.
Prospero. Then as my gift and thine own acquisition
Worthily purchased, take my daughter.
Sit, then, and talk with her ; she is thine own.

Next, led by the delicate Ariel, follows a masque, — such a one as was in fashion in the time of Shakspeare. The performers are Iris, Ceres, Juno, and nymphs. This masque is founded upon one represented at Sterling, before King James and his court in 1594, at the baptism of Prince Henry. It contains some lovely poetry, and blessings appropriate for a marriage occasion. In the midst of the performance Prospero recollects that his life is threatened by the vile trio, Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban. Much excited, he answers Ferdinand's inquiring looks by one of the noblest passages in all poetry : —

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air — into thin air.
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve ;
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wrack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

Meantime Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban are splashing and floundering near by in a dirty pool; emerging from the pool, they spy rich clothing which Prospero has sacrificed to be a bait for them. In vain Caliban urges them on to the deed of most importance, the murder of Prospero. What with the wine and the wet and the gay clothes, they are quite beyond his management. Stephano, seeing the clothes on a line, revives some of his nautical experiences about the equatorial line, and the old saying that the hair comes off those who pass under it. As they are engaged in robbery, Prospero sends spirits like a pack of dogs, to hunt and rend them.

ACT V. *Scene* 1.

Prospero has now all his enemies in his power. He seats himself in his magic robes, attended by Ariel. "As Miranda," says Mrs. Jameson, "being what she is, could only have had an enchanted island for her abode, a Ferdinand for her lover, an Ariel for her attendant, — so she could, with propriety, have had no other father than the majestic and gifted being who fondly claims her as a thread of his own life, — nay, that for which he lives. Prospero, with his magical powers, his superhuman wisdom, his moral worth and grandeur, and his kingly dignity, is one of the most sublime visions that ever swept before the eye of fancy. He controls the invisible world, and works through the agency of spirits; not by any evil and forbidden compact, but solely by superior might of intellect, — by potent spells gathered from the lore of ages, and abjured when he mingles again as a prince among men."

I do not think we commonly estimate the esteem in which astrology and its kindred studies were held in Shakspeare's

age. Some of the greatest men in that day dabbled in such sciences. "Lord Bacon, Archbishop Ussher, Milton, Dryden, Bishop Hall, Sir Matthew Hale, Sir Richard Steele, — some of them living in Shakspeare's time, and some later, — had dealings with astrology." Queen Elizabeth kept her own astrologer, Dr. Dee. He was made Chancellor of St. Paul's, and drew up many important state papers. Shakspeare was no astrologer himself, for he ridicules it in "King Lear;" but there was nothing degrading to a great man in his day in making him a first-class wizard.

Being sure of the happiness of Miranda and Ferdinand, and of Prospero's triumph over his enemies, what we most wish for, in the fifth act, is the release of dainty Ariel. The King of Naples and his attendants are brought into a magic circle, that Prospero has drawn around him; there the King of Naples and Sebastian are overcome and conscience-stricken; while Ariel sings his loveliest song.

"It has been observed," says Hazlitt, "that there is a peculiar charm in the songs introduced in Shakspeare, which, without conveying any very distinct images, seem to recall all the feelings connected with them, — like snatches of half-forgotten music heard indistinctly, and at intervals. There is this effect produced by Ariel's songs, which seem to sound in the air, as if the person playing them were invisible."

Thus he sings, while helping to divest Prospero of his magic robe, and attire him as Duke of Milan: —

> Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
> In a cowslip's bell I lie;
> There I couch when owls do cry.
> On the bat's back do I fly,
> After summer, merrily;

Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

Even in this hour of happiness, the Master sighs to think how he shall miss his dainty spirit.

Then, to the consternation of all, even the good Gonzalo, who has no wrongs to Prospero upon his soul, the banished Duke steps forth in his own person, and confronts his enemies. Alonzo welcomes him with penitence and curiosity. Gonzalo believes not for joy, when he beholds him; Sebastian cries, "The devil speaks in him;" Antonio stands dumbfounded.

Then Alonzo, in his contrition and bereavement, hearing that Prospero has a daughter, bethinks him of his lost Ferdinand, and cries: —

O heavens! that they were living both in Naples,
The king and queen there!

At this Prospero invites him to look into his cell, where they discover Ferdinand and Miranda playing at chess.

Miranda. Sweet lord, you play me false.
Ferdinand. No, my dearest love,
I would not for the world.
Miranda. Yes, for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle,
And I would call 't fair play.
Alonzo. If this prove but
A vision of the island, one dear son
Shall I twice lose.
Sebastian. A most high miracle!
Ferdinand [*perceiving his father and kneeling to him*].
Though the seas threaten, they are merciful;
I have cursed them without cause.
Alonzo. Now all the blessings
Of a glad father compass thee about!
Arise, and say how thou camest here.
Miranda. O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!

How beauteous mankind is! O, brave new world!
That has such people in it.
Prospero. 'T is new to thee.
Alonzo. What is this maid with whom thou wast at play?
Your eld'st acquaintance cannot be three hours.
Is she the goddess that hath severed us,
And brought us thus together?
Ferdinand. Sir, she 's mortal;
But, by immortal Providence, she 's mine!
I chose her when I could not ask my father
For his advice, nor thought I had one. She
Is daughter to this famous Duke of Milan,
Of whom so often I have heard renown,
But never saw before. Of whom I have
Received a second life; and second father,
This lady makes him to me.
Alonzo. I am hers.
But O! how oddly will it sound, that I
Must ask my child forgiveness!
Prospero. There, sir, stop;
Let us not burthen our remembrance
With a heaviness that 's gone.

And in furtherance of this generous sentiment, none of the wicked, in this play, are any longer punished. Indeed, we may be sure that even their just punishment would have marred the felicity of tender-hearted Miranda.

The captain and the boatswain of the wrecked ship come in to report that she is riding safely at anchor in the road-stead. Then Caliban, with Stephano and Trinculo, in their stolen apparel, are driven into the presence of the King, Duke, and Princes, by Ariel. The drunken butler, and the drunken jester are recognized by their masters, and the worst punishment they meet with is a few cramps, and separation from their stolen goods and butt of sack; for they are ordered at once on board. Caliban, with the reflection, —

> What a thrice double ass
> Was I to take this drunkard for a god!

is sent at once to deck the cell for all the company, — and so earn pardon; while the last words of the play are those of Prospero: —

> I promise you calm seas, auspicious gales,
> And sail so expeditious that shall catch
> Your royal fleet far off. My Ariel, — chick, —
> That is thy charge, — then to the elements
> Be free, and fare thou well.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

NO Play was ever named more appropriately than this; it is a "Dream," — a dream composed of elves, mistakes, wild fantasies, and the grotesque. Its time is night. When the day dawns the shadows flee away, the *dramatis personæ* awake, and all comes right again. Shakspeare may have dreamed it, lying on some cowslip bank. And, what is most remarkable in this play, written by a master of character, there are almost no human characters in it that we can take an interest in. We care little for Helena, or Hermia; Lysander, or Demetrius; Theseus, or Hippolyta: our interest is in the loveliness, and gracefulness, and grotesqueness of the dream. Speaking of Shakspeare as a master of character, I should like to quote to you a passage from Coleridge, which applies with equal force to him who, I think, most nearly approached Shakspeare, — I mean Balzac. Coleridge says: "The characters of Shakspeare's *dramatis personæ*, like those in real life, are to be inferred by the reader, — they are not told him. Like characters in real life, they are very commonly misunderstood, and almost always understood by different persons in different ways; . . . even the character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, and not exactly as he is. . . . You may know whether you have, in fact, discovered the poet's own idea,

by all the speeches receiving light from it. . . . You must not suppose a pressure and a passion always acting on, or in, the character. Passion, in Shakspeare, is that by which the individual is distinguished from others, not that which makes a different kind of man of him. Shakspeare followed the main march of human affections. He entered into no analyses of the passions and faiths of men, but assured himself that such and such passions and faiths were grounded on our common nature, and not on the mere incidents of ignorance or disease. This is an important consideration, and constitutes our Shakspeare the morning-star — the guide and pioneer — of true philosophy. . . . In his mode of drawing characters there are no pompous descriptions of a man by himself; his character is to be drawn, as in real life, from the whole course of the play, or out of the mouths of friends or enemies."

Perhaps this passage seems inappropriate as an opening to a drama in which there are no carefully delineated characters; but even here, Shakspeare could not create human beings without enduing them with life. We have the good-natured, appreciative Theseus, who makes the best of everything; the proud, fastidious Hippolyta; the tall, fair, spiteful, cowardly, exasperated Helena; the *petite*, sprightly, dark, confiding, outraged Hermia, — brave, but with a will and temper of her own; Lysander, the true gentleman and lover; Demetrius, who was no gentleman, but at once hot-tempered and a sneak. Just as in newspaper illustrations, a French artist, with half a dozen random scratches of the pen, makes his sketch instinct with life and meaning, so Shakspeare, in his merest sketches, gives the spirit of a finished and elaborated portrait; and nowhere do we see this more plainly than

in the "Midsummer Night's Dream." Observe, in contrast, that the fairies, and the clown-fairy, Puck, have no characters at all. Oberon is possessed by the spirit of jealousy; Titania, by a spirit of tormenting; Puck delights in putting his finger into every pie, for frolic's sake, be it to mar or mend; but we do not feel in the least that Oberon is of a jealous disposition, or that Titania is a fairy Cressida, or that Puck is steeped in malignity. Their jealousy, their caprices, or their mischief, are mere surface qualities.

The Gods of Hellas, as we find them in the Iliad, were of various origins. Besides the Olympian divinities, there were the adopted gods of Asia, — the gods, Saturn, and others, who preceded the Olympians, and who seem a survival of the light from Paradise; there were also deified qualities, as Rumor, Discord, etc.; and there were the gods native to the soil, — dryads, and nereids, the wood-nymphs, water-nymphs, and sea-nymphs, of antiquity. In like manner, everywhere that the Celts settled, — or those Indo-Aryan tribes who were our ancestors, — they made, or they found, the earth peopled with elves, fairies, and nixies. The elves, or gnomes, lived under the earth; the fairies above ground; the nixies in the water. The monks of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries — chiefly men of peasant birth — carried their belief in these beings into their cells. "They adopted the popular traditions, and turned them into Saints' legends. Indeed, a more extensive knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon fairies," says Mr. Thomas Wright, the antiquary, "may perhaps be gathered from the legends of the Anglo-Saxon Saints than from all other sources. Only remembering that in the transformation, the elves, when mischievously inclined,

became devils; and when beneficent, angels." The familiar name of Old Nick, popularly applied to the great spirit of Evil, is borrowed from the vocabulary of Paganism, — the nickers, or nixies, being water-fairies, who not only dwelt like kelpies in the lakes and rivers, but had their habitation in the sea. There is nothing that commends itself to our fancy in any of the popular stories of little black elves, hatched out of an incubus, who spent their time in alternately persecuting and assisting the human race. The Pucks, *follets*, and brownies, of domestic life, "generally haunted the houses of country people, whence neither holy water, nor exorcism, could expel them. They were invisible, but made known their presence by throwing about stones and wood, and even the pots and kettles." Our devil derived from them his horns, his hoofs, and tail. They were the devils who held intercourse with witches. In an old manuscript in Vienna, written before such familiarity with the world of spirits was considered to deserve the extreme pains of heresy, we find penances imposed on those who "had thrown little bows, and small shoes into their cellars and barns, in order that the hobgoblins might come thither to play with them, and might in return, bring them other people's goods." The same class of stories is still popular in Brittany. But as we read of these coarse goblins, lubber-fiends, or changeling elves, our minds reject them either as fairies or as devils. These thoughts become rebuked when we see how Shakspeare has evoked the richest poetry out of what seemed to us unpromising material. Fairies, long since, would have faded from our literature, had not Shakspeare, seizing on the traditions of an ignorant and semi-pagan people, embalmed them, to be the delight of the civilized world.

The only poetical notion which we find in ancient chronicles concerning elves professes to be given on the authority of one of themselves. He said that they were a portion of the angels who fell with Lucifer, but inasmuch as, having been deluded and seduced, they were not so criminal as their fellows, their sentence had been less severe; they were allowed to live on earth, — some of them having their peculiar dwelling-place in the air, others in the waters, some again in trees and fountains, and many in the caverns of the earth. The elfin informant went on to confess that "as Christianity spread over the earth they had much less power than formerly."

Shakspeare has given us five species of these supernatural beings, — the spirit of the air, who is Ariel; the fairies proper, who dance in their rings and enjoy themselves by moonlight; the dreamland fairy (Queen Mab) in "Romeo and Juliet;" the elfin Puck; and perhaps we may add that he has drawn the "lubber-fiend," all corporeality, in Caliban. These differ from one another as star from star. Drayton, Shakspeare's contemporary, wrote a beautiful, and little appreciated poem upon Queen Titania. The ballad of "Robin Goodfellow," to be found in our collections of ballad poetry is attributed to Ben Jonson, but there were earlier ballads on the same subject. Some trace the name of Puck to an old fashioned name for the devil, derived from the same word as our Americanism "spook," which is of Low-Dutch origin.

The "Midsummer Night's Dream" was first printed in 1598. It seems to have been an object of care to Shakspeare, as the earliest printed copies are more carefully corrected than usual. It went early into two editions. Theseus and Hippolyta had their origin in Chaucer's "Knight's Tale."

The scene is supposed to be laid in Athens, in which case Athens must have been a mediæval principality as to manners and customs. Theseus, having conquered the Queen of the Amazons, is about to wed her when the action opens. He shows himself at once kindly and jovial. The Amazonian lady is matter-of-fact and business-like. I see reason to fear he got the worst share in his matrimonial bargain.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

As usual, the opening scene gives the keynote of the drama. Theseus and Hippolyta are speaking of the moon, the hours of night, the time of dreams, when we first see them; as they are talking they are interrupted by an Athenian *pater familias*, who comes to complain to his sovereign that his daughter Hermia declines to marry Demetrius, the husband he has chosen for her, and wilfully persists that she will wed Lysander. Theseus, thus appealed to, addresses some commonplace remarks to Hermia as to a daughter's duty, but in the flush of his own prosperous wooing he is evidently disposed to help and pity the poor girl, who modestly asks what is the legal penalty of disobedience. Theseus answers her: —

> Either to die the death, or to abjure
> Forever the society of men.
> Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
> Know of your youth, examine well your blood
> Whether if you yield not to your father's choice
> You can endure the livery of a nun,
> For aye to be in shady cloister mewed, —
> To live a barren sister all your life,
> Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
> Thrice blessed they that master so their blood
> To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
> But earthlier happy is the rose distilled

Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.
Hermia. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.
Theseus. Take time to pause; and by the next new moon
(The sealing day between my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship),
Upon that day either prepare to die,
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else, to wed Demetrius as he would,
Or on Diana's altar to protest,
For aye, austerity and single life.

Demetrius, at the close of this speech, is insolent and peremptory with Lysander, and pitiless to Hermia. Lysander, as a gentleman, could not yield up the woman who had just made a declaration of her love for him. He answers old Egeus with self-constraint and dignity, bringing however, a perfectly true accusation against Demetrius, that he had, while courting Hermia, made love to Nedar's daughter Helena, and "won her soul;" which accusation has considerable effect on Theseus, who, notwithstanding his stern words, contrives that the lovers shall have an uninterrupted interview. He leads off Hippolyta, saying, "What cheer, my love?" At first sight it seems as if this question indicated that Hippolyta was saddened by Hermia's sad case, but as we come to know her better I think we shall conclude that she was simply vexed at having her lord's time and attention drawn away from her by a matter of business.

Lysander and Hermia being left alone, here is what they say to each other. I have omitted the interruptions made by Hermia to her lover's speech; they are considered interpolations by some commentators.

Lysander. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?
Hermia. Belike for want of rain; which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of mine eyes.
Lysander. Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But either it was different in blood,
Or else misgrafted with respect of years,
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,
Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it as momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That in a spleen unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man has time to say, Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up;
So quick bright things come to confusion.
Hermia. If then true lovers have been ever crossed,
It stands as an edict in destiny;
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes, and tears, — poor Fancy's followers.
Lysander. A good persuasion. Therefore hear me, Hermia.
I have a widowed aunt, a dowager,
Of great revenue, and she hath no child.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues,
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me, then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night,
And in the wood a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.
Hermia. My good Lysander!
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,

By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burned the Carthage queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lysander. Keep promise, love. Look! here comes Helena.

Hermia. Good speed, fair Helena. Whither away?

Helena is not disposed to receive her rival's courtesy with any amiability. Demetrius had won her heart, while earnest only in pursuit of Hermia. She was a shrew by nature, and is now petulant and soured by jealousy and misfortune. Why Lysander and Hermia thought it best to tell her, as they do, their plan for elopement I cannot imagine. The speeches are very pretty in which they announce it to her.

Lysander. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold;
To-morrow night when Phœbe doth behold
Her silvery visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass, —
A time that lover's flights doth still conceal, —
Through Athens' gates we have devised to steal.

Hermia. And in the wood where often you and I
Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes
To seek new friends and stranger companies,
Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!

After receiving this kindly sweet farewell Helena resolves to make mischief by telling Demetrius the lovers' plans. Perhaps she thinks he will be pleased with her for telling

him, perhaps that he will turn in disgust from Hermia; anyhow, she will enjoy the highly indecorous privilege of following him by night into the wood. We may mark here the difference shown throughout the play in the sense of modesty between Helena and Hermia.

Scene 2.

This is one of Shakspeare's most inimitable comic scenes, and on it the whole play turns. Shakspeare's vulgar folk have none of the exaggeration of those of Dickens; they are like Hardy's or George Eliot's, — comic because they are simply themselves. Shakspeare was no lover of mobs, nor of "mechanicals," — he was not imbued with our modern spirit of democracy; but the English vulgar now, and still more in Shakspeare's time, were not like the great body of the American working-classes, with whom stupidity is not the danger, but such a keen sense of class interests as will make them easy to be led by demagogues or bosses, while all the time they flatter themselves *they* rule. It is a crude intelligence, combined with self-will and a little knowledge (just enough to mislead the judgment), that is the danger with our working-classes. In Shakspeare's day (and with the ordinary English mob) the danger lay in brutishness, and a sort of impassive stupidity. A French mob may be led by a sentiment; an English mob is blind, and fierce, and brutal; an American mob means business, and in all its excitement, keeps its own self-interest— the main chance it has in contemplation — well in mind.

There is a double satire in these scenes with the play-acting mechanics. First, they are satirized as a class, and

secondly, there is a satire on the goings-on in a dramatic company.

Observe how Bottom — Bully Bottom — takes everything that he can out of Quince's hands. Note his desire to act every character himself. He is ready to squeak in a woman's voice or to roar you like a lion. His forthputting is exactly what might be expected from a man of his station, accustomed to be looked up to by his fellows. "Humility," said old Bishop Griswold of Massachusetts, "is a virtue I have seen occasionally among the rich, but have never observed among the poor."

Then, too, it is delicious to see how Quince is driven to flatter Bottom; and who, in private theatricals, does not know the pother often made by some fussy performer about *his* beard, or *her* lace, or some point that is of comparatively no importance whatever to the other actors?

Quince. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bottom. What is Pyramus? — a lover, or a tyrant?

Quince. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bottom. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. If I do it let the audience look to their eyes. I will move storms. I will condole in some measure. . . . Yet my chief humor is for a tyrant. I could play Ercles rarely; or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split. . . .

Quince. No, no; you must play Pyramus, and, Flute, you Thisbe.

Bottom. An I may hide my face, let *me* play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice.

Quince. No, no; you *must* play Pyramus. . . . Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part; myself, Thisbe's father; and now, I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? If it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quince. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bottom. Let me play the lion too. I will roar that it will do any man's heart good to hear me. I will roar that I will make the duke say, Let him roar again.

Quince. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

Bottom. I grant you, friends, that if you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us; but I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 't were any nightingale.

Quince. You can play no part but Pyramus, for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely gentlemanlike man; therefore *you* must needs play Pyramus.

Bottom. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in? . . .

Quince. Well, masters, here are your parts, and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con them over, and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse. . . . At the Duke's Oak we meet.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

To the first scene of this second act, Hazlitt's words are especially appropriate. He says: "The reading of this play is like wandering in a grove by moonlight; the descriptions breathe a sweetness like odors thrown from beds of flowers." Observe, too, the sweetness and harmony of the words of the fairy's song. All Shakspeare's songs have music in their words, and were probably intended to be sung with very little orchestral accompaniment. Many years ago, in London, I used sometimes to attend a madrigal club, where about twenty ladies and gentlemen met once a week to sing madrigals and catches, and these old Shakspeare songs, to music of the days of Queen Elizabeth. They sang without accompaniment, and the effect was charming.

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,

I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moones sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green;
The cowslips tall her pensioners be,
In their gold cups spots you see;
These be rubies, fairy favors;
In those speckles live their savors;
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I 'll be gone;
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Before leaving, Puck charges the fairy to keep her mistress from the sight of Oberon. She has refused perversely to give up to him her pretty changeling boy.

And now they never meet, in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,
But they do square, that all their elves do fear, —
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

"If," says Gervinus, "Shakspeare wished us to conceive of fairies as personified dreams, he carried out this object in wonderful harmony, both as regards their actions and their condition. Their kingdom is placed in the aromatic, flower-scented Indies, where mortals live in a half-dreamy state. From thence they came, 'following darkness,' as Puck says, 'like a dream.' Airy, and swift, like the moon they circle the earth; they avoid the sunlight, without fearing it, and seek the darkness; they love the moon, and dance in her beams; and above all, they delight in the dusk and twilight, — the very season for dreams." Dreams and moonlight are words that recur again and again, on every page of the "Midsummer Night's Dream."

"The fairy people, lords of a kingdom in which all ideas come only through the senses, as in dreams, lead a luxurious, merry life; the secrets of nature, and the powers of flowers and herbs are confided to them. . . . Their life of sense and nature is seasoned by the power of fancy, and by desires after all that is most choice, most beautiful, most agreeable. They harmonize with nightingales and butterflies; they wage war with all ugly creatures, — with hedgehogs, spiders, and bats. Dancing, play, and song are their greatest pleasures; they steal lovely children, and substitute changelings; they torment decrepit old age, toothless gossips, elderly aunts, and the awkward performers of 'Pyramus and Thisbe.'" Puck is, as it were, the clown among these dainty creatures. The fairy thus addresses him: —

> Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
> Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
> Called Robin Goodfellow. Are you not he
> That fright the maidens of the villag'ry,
> Skim milk, and sometimes labor in the quern,
> And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
> And sometimes make the beer to bear no balm;
> Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
> Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
> You do their work, and they shall have good luck;
> Are you not he?
> *Puck.* Thou speak'st aright;
> I am that merry wanderer of the night.

And then, brimming over with delight at the recollection of his mischief, he proceeds to tell divers of his pranks played in farm-houses on old women. When the poor old aunt slips off her stool, and cries "Tailor!" it is because she finds herself sitting tailor-fashion on the floor.

Scene 2.

The fairy wife and husband having met, they at once begin to reproach each other. Titania starts off by accusing Oberon of admiring Hippolyta; he retorts by bringing up her admiration for Theseus. Titania answers him in a lovely speech describing the terrible floods and the abnormal conditions of the seasons in England, in 1595.

Then, as Titania flits away with her train of fairies, Oberon addresses Puck in a speech which is believed to contain allusions to the Virgin Queen Elizabeth, and to the glorious fête given her at Kenilworth, by her lover, the Earl of Leicester, in 1575. The mermaid on the dolphin's back in the lake, singing dulcet songs to welcome Elizabeth's arrival at the Castle, was part of the pageantry. Till Elizabeth put Essex to death, Shakspeare loved and reverenced her, though he never addressed to her the fulsome adulation common among courtiers in that day. He was summoned to act before her only three weeks before her death, but though called upon repeatedly by brother bards to sing her praises after death, he could not bring himself to lay one flower of his verse upon the tomb of her who had signed the death-warrant of the friend, kinsman, and general of Lord Southampton,—the man whom of all others Shakspeare most loved, and most delighted to honor. Stratford was near Kenilworth, and Shakspeare, a boy of nine, may well have sat upon a promontory and seen what Oberon describes here.

Oberon. My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou remembrest
How once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,

And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.
That very time I saw, — but thou could'st not, —
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all armed. A certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the West,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts.
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell.
It fell upon a little western flower, —
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound, —
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower, — the herb I showed thee once.
The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that is seen.
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.
Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.

As Oberon soliloquizes on the trick he means to play with pansy, juice (one of the pansy's many names is love-in-idleness) upon perverse Titania, Demetrius and Helena come upon the scene. Demetrius is as little like a gentleman in his conduct to the poor girl as he can well be. He is harsh, rude, cruel. She repels us by the want of self-respect she shows, and her lack of modesty. With this want of modesty, even Demetrius reproaches her, — a lesson out of Shakspeare to any girl whom any young man, rightly or wrongly, supposes to be "running after him." And yet Helena can theorize well enough upon this subject. Perhaps her own sad experience had taught her that "we

should be wooed, and were not made to woo." But in the very next breath the infatuated girl declares: "I 'll follow thee — and make a heaven of hell." Somebody has said that to spare a lover the pleasure of pursuit is to defraud him of one of his masculine privileges; for men were meant for hunters.

Oberon, having observed this scene, takes compassion upon Helena, and Puck entering as the pair disappear deeper into the greenwood, he says: —

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine;
There sleeps Titania some time of the night,
Lulled in those flowers with dances and delight,
And there the snake throws her enamelled skin,
Robe wide enough to wrap a fairy in.
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove.
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth; anoint his eyes,
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady. Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he has on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love.

Scene 3.

This is a most charming fairy scene of dance and music.

Titania. Come, now a roundel and a fairy song!
Then for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some, war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some, keep back

The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now to sleep.

SONG.

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hog, be not seen;
Newts and blind worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen.
Chorus. Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby;
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So good-night, with lullaby.

[*Exeunt fairies. Titania sleeps. Enter Oberon. Squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids.*]

What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true love take;
Love and languish for his sake.
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thine eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear.
Wake when some vile thing is near.

Next, Lysander and Hermia, having lost their way in the dark, wander in this direction. They contrast most favorably with Demetrius and Helena. Lysander is a gentleman by nature, and Hermia is charming in her tenderness, and trust, and modesty. Sleeping upon a bank at some distance apart, Puck finds them, and with a speech which is a song, drops the juice of enchantment into Lysander's eyes. No sooner is this done than Demetrius and Helena come upon the scene. Demetrius succeeds in shaking off Helena, who alone, jealous of Hermia, and afraid of wild beasts, suddenly sees Lysander sleeping. He wakes as she bends over him; the charm works, and he begins to make violent love to her-

She deems it cruel mockery, and runs away. Lysander, preparing to pursue her, takes leave of sleeping Hermia with words that utter a truth well known in our own day, but not generally acknowledged, we should think, in Shakspeare's, — namely, that the bitterest opponents of any opinion are those who have ceased to believe it.

> Hermia, sleep thou there ;
> And never may'st thou come Lysander near.
> For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
> The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,
> Or as the heresies that men do leave
> Are hated most of those they did deceive,
> So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
> Of all be hated, — but the most of me !

Soon after, Hermia wakes in sudden fright, having had an evil dream, and calls upon Lysander. No Lysander answers. He is gone, — he must be dead ! Her terrors are very pathetic, very touching. She never dreams of doubting him.

> Lysander ! What, removed ? Lysander ! lord !
> What, out of hearing ? — gone ? — no sound ? no word ?
> Alack, where are you ? Speak, an if you hear ;
> Speak, of all loves. I swoon almost with fear.
> No ! then I well perceive you are not nigh ;
> Either death or you I 'll find immediately.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

In this scene we have Titania lying asleep beside the Duke's Oak, the meeting-place decided on by the players for their rehearsal. Again let me remark how much of sleep there is throughout this "Dream."

The players arrive, all true to their appointments. Bottom, having thought the matter over, is ready with a new device, that may enable him to monopolize another part in the per-

formance. He wants to be Prologue. Again he insists on making further suggestions about the lion. Poor Quince, willing so far as he can to keep everybody in good humor, and anxious above everything to have the play go on, at once accepts Bottom's suggestions, in order that he may bring forward his own difficulties. How about moonshine? How about the wall? Bottom is all ready with suggestions. Quince thinks moonshine might be represented by a man with a thornbush and a lantern. Cain with his thornbush and his lantern figures as the man in the moon in Dante's Paradiso. Then the wall? Bottom again suggests how the wall may be represented. Quince again is acquiescent, admiring Bottom as cock of the walk among his fellows, and being anxious to get his players to their work without any more discussion.

Snug. You never can bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

Bottom. Some man or other must present wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him to signify wall. Or let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny let Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

Quince. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

Then the rehearsal begins; Puck, entering, lingers in the shadows of the Duke's Oak as a spectator. When, after some difficulty, Bottom gets through his first speech, he retires into the covert, where immediately Puck pops over him an ass's head.

One reason why the "Midsummer Night's Dream" must be always more charming to read than it can be to see, is that in acting, its graceful fantasies have to be reduced to

materialism. Flesh-and-blood ballet-girls are poor representatives of elves who dined on honey-bags, crept into snake-skins, and made doublets out of bats' wings; and whereas this head of Bottom's was doubtless a magical contrivance, we are forced to represent it by a donkey's head. "No doubt," says Maginn, "it had expressions of mirth and tenderness and self-importance, which no creation of hair and pasteboard can ever set forth."

Bottom is wholly unconscious of his transformation, and is unspeakably astonished when, coming forth from the covert on hearing his next cue, all the party shriek and run away from him. He believes that they are playing him a trick, and while they run away as fast as their legs can carry them, he walks up and down, singing, that they may know *he* is not afraid! Luckily, he chooses no ribald song, but one fitting for the ear of a fairy.

> The ousel-cock, so black of hue,
> With orange-tawny bill,
> The throstle with his note so true,
> The wren with little quill. . . .

In the scene that follows when Titania wakes and falls in love with the transmogrified Bottom "we feel the delicious incongruity between the attentions that she lavishes upon the hairy boor, and his real nature. Bottom accepts the situation without difficulty. In his own opinion nothing can be too good for him. He enters into it all as he might have done in a dream." Cobwebs are still applied in country places to cut fingers. Their threads are also used in telescopes to mark out distances between the stars. A squash has no relation to our vegetable; it was old English for a budding pea.

Titania. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again;
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note,
So is mine eye enthrallèd to thy shape.
And thy fair virtues' force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say — to swear, I love thee.

Bottom. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that; and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days. The more the pity that some honest neighbors will not make them friends. . . .

Titania. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bottom. Not so neither. But if I had wit enough to get out of this wood I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Titania. Out of this wood do not desire to go;
Thou shalt remain here whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate,
The summer still doth tend upon my state,
And I do love thee. Therefore go with me.
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressèd flowers dost sleep,
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!
Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes,
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise.
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes,
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

Then, as the fairies do him reverence, Bottom inquires their names.

Bottom. I shall desire of you more acquaintance, Master Cobweb. If I cut my finger I shall make bold with *you.* Your name, honest gentleman?

Peas-blossom. Peas-blossom.

Bottom. I pray you commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peas-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance, too. *Your* name, I beseech you, sir?

Mustard-seed. Mustard-seed.

Bottom. Good Master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well. That same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred have made my eyes water ere now. I desire your more acquaintance, good Master Mustard-seed.

Titania. Come! wait upon him; lead him to my bower. . . . Tie up my love's tongue; bring him silently.

Scene 2.

Puck relates to Oberon that Titania is in love with "the shallowest thick-skin" of the mechanical actors, with an ass's head upon his shoulders; that his companions are scampering through bushes and briers (Puck's elfin nature enjoys the mischief he has created); and that he has also put juice into the eyes of the Athenian.

Then come in Demetrius and Hermia. She is accusing him of having murdered her missing Lysander. The scene on Hermia's part, — her alternate reproaching and pleading, — is very pretty. Demetrius behaves with selfish brutality; but his reflection that —

> Sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
> For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe,

is one that comes so home to our personal experience of insomnia that I am surprised it is not more often quoted.

When Demetrius, having chased away Hermia, lies down and sleeps, Oberon reproaches Puck for his mistake, and sends him off to lure thither Helena. Puck is gone but a moment, and then re-enters, singing, with true elfin malice, —

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord! what fools these mortals be!
Oberon. Stand aside; the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.
Puck. Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone.
And those things do best please me
That befall prepostrously.

Here enter Lysander and Helena. He is endeavoring to persuade her of the reality of his passion; she is not to be persuaded, but treats him throughout the scene with petulant derision. Her jealous hatred of Hermia peeps through all she says to him. The scene is in two six-lined verses, a metre unusual in a play. Then Demetrius awakening sees Helena, loves her, and urges his passion. Oberon and Puck stand by invisible, enjoying the perplexities they have created.

Helena's protest against the way she supposes herself to be now treated is the best thing we have yet had from her.

Helena. O spite! O hell! I see you are all bent
To set against me for your merriment.
If you were civil, and knew courtesy,
You would not do me so much injury.
Can you not hate me, — as I know you do, —
But you must join in souls to mock me too?
If you were men — as men you are in show —
You would not use a gentle lady so.
To vow, to swear, to superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me in your hearts.
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals to mock Helena, —
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! None of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport!

As each rival is protesting that he renounces Hermia, that forsaken damsel enters, guided thither by the voice of her Lysander. She cannot believe her ears when Lysander gives up all claim to her in the presence of Helena, who, too jealous to admit any virtue in her rival, accuses her of being in the conspiracy. The speech in which she reproaches her late friend is very celebrated: —

Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us, — O, and is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our neelds created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet a union in partition, —
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry
Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.
And will you rend our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly; 't is not maidenly;

Our sex as well as I may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.
Hermia. I am amazèd at your passionate words:
I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.
Helena. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me, to praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who e'en but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? And wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me forsooth, affection,
But by *your* setting on — by *your* consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate,
But miserable most, to love unloved?
This you should pity rather than despise.
Hermia. I understand not what you mean by this.
Helena. Ay, do persèver, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mows upon me when I turn my back,
Wink at each other, hold the sweet jest up;
This sport well carried shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well. 'T is partly mine own fault,
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

Helena becomes shrewish in her excitement. Hermia cannot think Lysander's love for Helena is anything but a cruel jest, and turns to him with an entreaty: "Sweet, do not scorn her so." Then the two rivals, Lysander and Demetrius, quarrel with each other. Hermia, growing alarmed, clings to Lysander, who, in his passion and excitement, speaks to her the cruelest words: —

Hands off, thou cat, thou burr! Vile thing! let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me as a serpent!

She loosens her hold, and then Demetrius taunts him with not having repulsed her with sufficient ferocity. "What!" cries Lysander, "should I hurt her? — strike her? — kill her dead? Although I hate her, I 'll not harm her so."

Then Hermia begins to believe that something is wrong. The scene is piteous. Puck, who had no human sympathy, may have enjoyed it, but there is not much fun in it to us mortals.

Hermia. Hate me? Wherefore? O me! what news, my love?
Am I not Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me.
Why, then, you left me — O, the gods forbid! —
In earnest, shall I say?
Lysander. Ay, by my life!
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, doubt.
Be certain — nothing truer; 't is no jest
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.
Hermia [*to Helena*]. O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! What! have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?
Helena. Fine, i' faith!
Have you no modesty — no maiden shame —
No touch of bashfulness? What! will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie! Fie! You counterfeit, you puppet you!
Hermia. Puppet? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game?
[*To Demetrius.*] Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage — her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth — she hath prevailed with him.
[*To Helena.*] And are you grown so high in his esteem
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I? thou painted Maypole, speak!
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Helena. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me. I was never curst;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice;
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think
Because she 's something lower than myself
That I can match her.
Hermia. Lower! Hark again!
Helena. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia;
Did ever keep your counsels, never wronged you,
Save that in love unto Demetrius
I told him of your stealth into this wood.
He followed you. For love I followed him.
But he hath chid me hence, and threatened me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too;
And now, so you will let me quiet go
To Athens, I will bear my folly back
And follow you no further. Let me go.
You see how simple and how fond I am.
Hermia. Why, get you gone! Who is 't that hinders you?

The girls endeavor to fly at each other, but are held back by the men, the tall Helena proving herself an arrant coward. Demetrius challenges Lysander for taking the part of Helena, and all is wild confusion. It gives me a bewildering conception of Shakspeare's mighty power of creation when I think that the same hand that made Portia, Imogen, Perdita, and Miranda, fashioned these two commonplace excitable girls. Yet, ill as they behave, neither quite loses our sympathy, and unladylike as much of their conduct is, we do not lose all sense of their being ladies. Very little comment, so far as I know, has been bestowed on Hermia and Helena. To me the skill that wove their flimsiness seems wonderful. Many writers seem to look on Helena as the most wronged, and the most worthy; in which estimate of their characters I cannot

myself agree. Helena from the first was mean, cowardly, treacherous, and lacking in modesty. In the end, Hermia, aggravated and excited, turns upon her, and when both have lost their tempers and their dignity there is little to choose between them.

While all the lovers rush deeper into the wood Oberon desires Puck to follow them, to anoint Lysander's eyes with the magic pansy juice, and lead them back to Athens.

At the close of the conference between Puck and Oberon, we are made to see the difference between ghosts and fairies. The former must troop back to their graves at cock-crow, but fairies may tread the groves till dawn. Puck says : —

> Yonder shines Aurora's harbinger ;
> At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,
> Troop home to churchyards ; damnèd spirits all,
> That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
> Already to their wormy beds have gone ;
> For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
> They willingly themselves exile from light,
> And must for aye consort with black-browed night.
> *Oberon.* But we are spirits of another sort ;
> I, with the morning's love have oft made sport,
> And like a forester the groves may tread,
> E'en till the eastern gate, all fiery red,
> Opening on Neptune with fair blessèd beams,
> Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.

Puck, having succeeded in drawing all four lovers under the Duke's Oak, and putting them to sleep, applies his remedy for the imbroglio to Lysander's eyes. As he does so he sings thus :

> On the ground
> Sleep sound.

I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

When thou wak'st
Thou tak'st
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye.
And the country proverb known,
That every man shall take his own,
In your waking shall be shown.
Jack shall have Jill,
Naught shall go ill.
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

This act opens with the court of Titania, who is enamoured of her Bottom. Oberon is watching them, invisible. Observe that Titania's infatuation for Bottom is all purity. It is the wildest folly, but fairy nature admits no thought of grosser evil.

Maginn says of the scene that follows: "It was necessary for the drama that Shakspeare should introduce among his fairy party a creature of earth's mould; and he has done it so as, in the midst of his mirth, to convey a picturesque satire on the fortune that governs the world, and upon those passions which elsewhere he had with agitating pathos to depict. As Romeo, the gentleman, is the unlucky man of Shakspeare, so does he here exhibit Bottom, the blockhead, as the lucky man, — one on whom Fortune showers her favors beyond measure. . . . He, the most unfitted for the fairy scene beyond all conceivable personages, makes his appearance, not as one to be expelled with loathing and derision, but to be instantly accepted as the chosen lover of the Queen of the

Fairies. Oberon, angry as he is with the caprices of his queen, did not anticipate any such object for her charmed affections. He did not dream that under the superintendence of Puck — his spirit of mischief — she is to be enamoured of the head of an ass, surmounting the body of a weaver. Bottom is an angel that awakes her from her flowery bed; a gentle mortal, whose enchanting note wins her ear, while his beauteous shape enthralls her eye, — one who is as wise as he is beautiful; one for whom all the magic treasures of the fairy kingdom are to be with surprising profusion dispensed. For him she gathers whatever wealth and delicacies the Land of Faëry can boast. Her most airy spirits are ordered to be kind and courteous to this *gentleman,* — for into that impossible character has the blindness of her love transmuted the clumsy and conceited clown. Apricocks, and dewberries, purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries are to feed his coarse palate; the thighs of bees, kindled by the light of fiery glow-worms, are to light him to his flower-decked bed; wings, plucked from painted butterflies are to fan the moon-beams from him as he sleeps, and in the very desperation of her intoxicating passion she feels that there is nothing that should not be yielded to the strange idol of her soul. Bottom, during the time he attracts the attentions of Titania, never for a moment thinks there is anything extraordinary in the matter. He takes the love of the Queen of the Fairies as a thing of course; orders about her tiny attendants as if they were so many apprentices at his loom, and dwells in Fairyland unobservant of its wonders, as quietly as if he were still in his workshop. Theseus would have bent in reverence before Titania: great is the courage and self-possession of an ass-head!"

Titania. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bank,
While I thine amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bottom. Where 's Monsieur Cobweb? Good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signor.

And then, when his head has been scratched, — for his "face feels marvellous hairy," — and when he has divulged his taste in music by a desire for the tongs and bones, and his appreciation of good living, by his appetite for oats and good sweet hay, Titania, perplexed by these unwonted tastes, answers him: —

I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch for thee new nuts.

Bottom. I'd rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come on me.

Titania. Sleep, then, and I will wind thee in my arms. . . .
O! how I love thee! How I dote on thee!

This sight moves Oberon to pity his deluded love, whom his charm has so degraded, — the more readily, no doubt, because, infatuated with this new caprice, she has given up to him the changeling boy. He bends over her and touches her eyelids with his disenchanting herb. Awaking she exclaims: —

My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamoured of an ass.

Oberon. There lies your love.

Titania. How came these things to pass?

Again and again we may remark how much sleep has to do with this play. Titania even believes her experience has been all a dream. As the reconciled fairy husband and wife take hands in the delight of their reunion and dance around the Duke's Tree, Hippolyta and Theseus, early afoot for the pleasures of the chase, come on the scene. Wondrous Shakspeare, who knows everything, gives us the best description in all literature of the baying of a pack of hounds. Hippolyta says: —

> I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
> When in a wood of Crete they bayed the bear
> With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
> Such gallant chiding; for besides the groves,
> The skies, the fountains, every region near
> Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard
> So musical a discord, — such sweet thunder.
>
> *Theseus.* My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
> So flewed, so sanded; and their heads are hung
> With ears that sweep away the morning dew.
> Crook-kneed, and dew-lapped like Thessalian bulls,
> Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells
> Each under each. A cry more tuneable
> Was never hollaed to, nor cheered with horn,
> In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.
> Judge when you hear.

Lover as he is, he does not like this Amazonian lady should praise the hounds of Hercules at the expense of his own kennel.

The lovers sleeping underneath the oak are roused by the horns and music of the hunting-party; and Demetrius having declared his love for Helena, Theseus over-rules the parental authority of Egeus, and appoints the nuptials of both couples — Demetrius with Helena, and Hermia with Lysander — to take place together with his own. To the lovers

likewise the adventures of the night seem to have been a dream.

Meantime in Quince's house the players are all bewailing the mysterious absence of Bottom. "His return being considered hopeless, the production of the play has been given up as utterly impossible." But suddenly he arrives blowing and domineering after his own fashion. There is little time for talk. He says hurriedly: —

All that I will tell you is that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps. Meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the long and the short is, *our* play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away! Go; away!

Act V. *Scene* 1.

The scene is a hall in the Duke's palace. The words that Theseus addresses to Hippolyta are closely associated with Shakspeare himself in every mind: —

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

I never thought Milton half understood or appreciated Shakspeare when he said of him, —

> "Sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
> Warbles his native wood-notes wild;"

but the "native wood-notes" are heard sweetest in the "Midsummer Night's Dream."

The subjects of Duke Theseus offer him his choice of four performances, — A song concerning the Battle of the Centaurs; a procession of tipsy Bacchanals; the Muses mourning for the death of learning; and "a tedious, brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth." This title attracts Theseus. He exclaims: —

> Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief?
> That is, hot ice, and wondrous strange snow.

A courtier standing by says he has seen the rehearsal of it.

> In all the play
> There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
> And tragical, my lord, it is;
> For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
> Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess
> Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
> The passion of loud laughter never shed.
> *Theseus.* What are they that do play it?
> *Courtier.* Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
> Which never labored in their minds till now;
> And now have toiled their unbreathed memories
> With this same play, against your nuptial.
> *Theseus.* And we will hear it.
> *Courtier.* No, my noble lord,
> It is not for you. I have heard it over
> And it is nothing — nothing in the world;
> Unless you can find sport in their intents,
> Extremely stretched, and conned with cruel pain
> To do you service.
> *Theseus.* I will hear that play,
> For never anything can be amiss
> When simpleness and duty tender it.

Hippolyta, who has no taste for being bored, objects, and Theseus answers her : —

> Our sport shall be to take what they mistake;
> And what poor duty cannot do,
> Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.
> Where I have come, great clerks have purposèd
> To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
> But I have seen them shiver and look pale,
> Make periods in the midst of sentences,
> Throttle their practised accent in their fears,
> And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,
> Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
> Out of this silence yet I picked a welcome;
> And in the modesty of fearful duty
> I read as much as from the rattling tongue
> Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
> Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,
> In least, speak most, to my capacity.

Theseus' courteous patience, Hippolyta's scarcely suppressed weariness, and Bottom's fearless desire of putting himself forward, are all things to be observed, as the royal audience comments on the tragical-comical play.

Bottom has his own way, and speaks the prologue, introducing all the characters, except Wall, who speaks for himself.

Then Pyramus and Thisbe converse in rhymed, disjointed lines, through Wall's fingers, and separate to meet again at "Ninny's tomb."

"This," says Hippolyta, "is the silliest stuff that ever I heard!"

"The best of this kind are but shadows," replies Theseus; "and the worst are no worse, if imagination mend them."

"It must be your imagination, then, and not theirs," she answers.

"The meaning of the Duke is, that however we may laugh at the silliness of Bottom and his companions in their ridiculous play, they do but labor under disadvantages common to all dramatists. 'All are but dealers in shadowy representations of life,' and their great aim must be to set the mind of the spectator to work out their conceptions." Shakspeare felt this deeply for himself, and alludes to it at length, in the opening address of the chorus of "Henry V." Whether he would have been gratified by the elaborate settings of his plays upon the modern stage, may be doubted. Imagination that is satisfied to repose itself on pasteboard will hardly soar into the highest realms of fancy. We may yet have to echo the grown man's complaint in Campbell's poem of "The Rainbow."

The play ends with the death of all the *dramatis personæ*, — Moonshine and the Lion alone being left to bury the dead. But Bottom, rising to his feet again, has nearly the last word, setting the Duke right upon some point in the tragedy with unruffled self-complacency.

"Adieu, Bottom, the weaver," cries Maginn, "and long may you go onward prospering in your course! But the prayer is needless, for you carry about with you the infallible talisman of success, the ass's head!"

The revels are concluded by Puck's song, of which Coleridge says: "It is Anacreon himself, in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity;" and then he adds, "Oh, what wealth, what wide ranging, and yet what compression, and condensation of English fancy! These thirty lines form a speckless diamond!"

> Now the hungry lion roars,
> And the wolf behowls the moon;

While the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the scritch-owl, scritching loud,
Puts the wretch that lies in woe
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets out his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide;
And we fairies that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic; not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallowed house.
I am sent with broom before
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Oberon. Through this house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire.
Every elf and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty, after me,
Sing and dance it trippingly.

Puck. If our shadows have offended
Think but this, and all is mended,—
That you have but slumbered here
While these visions did appear;
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding than a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend.

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

"TAMING OF THE SHREW" was founded on an old play published in 1594, called "The Taming of a Shrew." Probably, Shakspeare, while theatrical manager, wished to adapt it for acting at his theatre, and revised and largely rewrote it; but inasmuch as such a man as Shakspeare could not have satisfied himself without doing his best in any work he put his hand to, he so changed and improved it as to make a very ordinary acting-play into what we now find it. He took other people's plots and characters, and breathed into them the breath of life, so that each character became a living soul. In the course of his labors he wove into the plot some scenes, relating to Bianca's marriage, from a play by Ariosto. "Taming of the Shrew" is a play within a play; and the Induction, which is entirely Shakspeare's work, though founded on the old comedy, is one of his best pieces of farce.

The idea of the Induction comes probably from the East, like many another fairy tale brought back from the Crusades. It is the same as that in the charming story of the "Sleeper Awakened," told by Queen Scheherezade to her fiction-loving lord.

The characters of the Induction are: A Lord; Christopher Sly, a drunken tinker; Hostess; Page; Players; Huntsmen; etc.

Scene I. Of the Induction.

In a lonely village ale-house, Sly, in his cups, gets into a quarrel with the landlady. Sly is a braggart, who by dint of travel, possibly of soldiering, — he may have served under Essex at Cadiz, or perhaps, under Drake, against the Dons of the Spanish Main, — has picked up some disjointed Spanish words, and some vague notions of history. So when the landlady asks payment for his drink, he answers her: "Ye'r a baggage. The Slys are no rogues. Look in the Chronicles. We came in with Richard Conqueror. Therefore, *paucas pallabris*, — let the world slide. *Sessa!*" As the landlady goes off to fetch the local guardians of the peace, Sly falls asleep on the floor. Soon after, a lord enters, weary with hunting, and full of solicitude about his dogs.

He stumbles over Sly in his drunken sleep, exclaiming:

> O, monstrous beast! How like a swine he lies!
> Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!

Then a thought strikes him. He will have the man put in his own state bed, and when he wakes make him fancy himself a nobleman. Having asked his head huntsman whether such a joke would be fair fun, he goes on thus: —

> Then take him up, and manage well the jest.
> Carry him gently to my fairest chamber,
> And hang it round with all my wanton pictures;
> Balm his foul head with warm distillèd waters,
> And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet;
> Procure me music, ready when he wakes
> To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound;
> And if he chance to speak be ready straight,

And, with a low submissive reverence,
Say, What is it your honor will command?
Let one attend him with a silver basin
Full of rose-water, and bestrewed with flowers;
Another bear the ewer, the third a diaper,
And say, Will 't please your lordship cool your hands?
Some one be ready with a costly suit
And ask him what apparel he will wear;
Another tell him of his hounds and horse,
And that his lady mourns at his disease;
Persuade him that he hath been lunatic;
When he says *what* he is, say that he dreams,
For he is nothing but a mighty lord.
This do, and do it kindly, gentle sirs,
It will be pastime passing excellent
If it be husbanded with modesty.

1 *Huntsman.* My lord, I warrant you we 'll play our part
As he shall think, by our true diligence,
He is no less than what we say he is.

Lord. Take him up gently, and to bed with him;
And each one to his office when he wakes.

[*Some bear out Sly. A trumpet sounds.*

The lord sends at once to see what is the meaning of the trumpet, and finds it announces some players, who, according to an English custom surviving to Mr. Crummles' and Miss Snivellici's day, had come to offer their services to perform before the chief man of the neighborhood.

The courtesy of the lord to these players is very pleasing. He remembers several of them, and commends their former acting. Then, before sending them to the buttery, there to receive friendly welcome, he says: —

Well, you are come to me in happy time,
The rather for I have some sport in hand
Wherein your cunning can assist me much.
There is a lord will hear you play to-night;
But I am doubtful of your modesties,

Lest, over-eyeing of his odd behavior
(For yet his honor never heard a play),
You break into some merry passion
And so offend him. For I tell you, sirs,
If you should smile he grows impatient.
1 *Player.* Fear not, my lord. We can contain ourselves,
Were he the veriest antic in the world.

Then, the players being dismissed to take refreshment, the lord sends orders to Bartholomew, his page, to dress himself as a lady. He is to bear himself towards the drunkard with "honorable action, such as he hath observed in noble ladies unto their lords, — with soft low tongue, and lowly courtesy," and say: —

What is 't your honor would command
Wherein your lady, and your humble wife
May show her duty, and make known her love?
And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses,
And with declining head into his bosom,
Bid him shed tears; as being overjoyed
To see her noble lord restored to health,
Who for twice seven years hath esteemed him
No better than a poor and loathsome beggar;
And if the boy have not a woman's gift
To rain a shower of commanded tears,
An onion will do well for such a shift;
Which, in a napkin being close conveyed,
Shall in despite enforce a watery eye.

Then, in soliloquy, —

I know the boy will well usurp the grace,
Voice, gait, and action of a gentlewoman;
I long to hear him call the drunkard, husband.
And how my men shall stay themselves from laughter
When they do homage to this simple peasant.
I 'll in to counsel them. Haply my presence
May well abate the over-merry spleen
Which otherwise would grow into extremes.

Scene 2. Of the Induction.

Accordingly, Sly is next exhibited in a bed-chamber in the lord's house, in a rich night-gown, with attendants; the lord himself (a true gentleman, who will not have the fun carried too far) is waiting upon him. The servants succeed in persuading Sly that he has been out of his mind, or in a dream, for fourteen years. It is worth remarking that the people Sly mentions, John Naps, Cicely Hacket of Wincot, Peter Turf, and Henry Pimpernell, were real persons whose names have been preserved in Stratford and Wincot records. Through all the scene Christopher is anxious to feel assured of his identity by testing it by his relish for a pot of Warwickshire beer.

It seems to me this introduction is as much as to say to the audience, the reader, or posterity, that the play it introduces does not "hold the mirror up to nature;" it is a farce.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

The original scene of the play was laid in Greece; Shakspeare shifts it to Padua. The stage father, the stage lover, the stage young lady, the stage confidant, and the opening scene are all conventional. I think this is designed as a background to bring out Petruchio, Katharine, and Grumio, who are the furthest remove from commonplace.

Lucentio, the stage hero, is a young man on his travels, just arrived in Padua. He converses in the public street with his servant Tranio. His father, Vincentio, is a rich merchant of Pisa. Tranio — a sort of bear-leader, and something of a toady — urges his young lord to study only as much as he may find agreeable. His argument consists

of the schoolboy's logic. Duty is a pleasure; therefore where there is pleasure none, there is duty none. We see from Tranio's first speech that he is a man who will willingly help his master's son into or out of any scrape or folly.

As they are talking, there appear Baptista, a rich gentleman of Padua, his two daughters, Katharine and Bianca, and two gentlemen, — Gremio, an elderly man, and Hortensio.

Old Baptista is a miserable old selfish father; no wonder he bred Katharine to scorn him, and Bianca to deceive him. He is talking to the gentlemen, who are both suitors for Bianca, and, — without a thought for Bianca's happiness or Katharine's honor, but solely because he wants to get rid of a troublesome daughter, — he refuses them Bianca, and throws Katharine at their heads. In spite of her high spirit, the girl, who can scarcely believe her own ears, turns quietly to her father, and asks, can he really mean what he says? The two men, in spite of her father's presence, — that father in whom Katharine finds no protector, — openly scoff at her, and at her reputation. She turns upon them, coarsely and rudely, it is true, but with an instinct of self-defence. A woman left to fight her own battles, with even those of her own household against her, can hardly fail to be rough and rude.

Common opinion, we see, admires the stage heroine Bianca; Lucentio at first sight falls in love with her; and yet half a dozen Biancas are not worth that shrewish Katharine.

Then Gremio takes it on himself to plead for Bianca, that he may make his suit acceptable to her, I suppose; for Bianca, as he speaks, is still within hearing.

Gremio. Why, will you mew her up,
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,
And make her bear the penance of her tongue?
Baptista. Gentlemen, content ye. I am resolved.
Go in, Bianca.
And, for I know she taketh most delight
In music, instruments, and poetry,
Schoolmasters will I keep within my house
Fit to instruct her youth. If you, Hortensio,
Or, Signior Gremio, you, know any such,
Prefer them hither; for to cunning men
I will be very kind, — and liberal
To mine own children in good bringing up.
And so farewell. Katharina, you may stay;
For I have more to commune with Bianca. [*Exit.*
Katharine. Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not?
What! shall I be appointed hours, as though, belike
I knew not what to take, and what to leave? Ha! [*Exit.*

This speech is wrung from Katharine by the painfulness of her position, and the coarse impertinence of the men around her. She flounces off the stage with a sore heart.

Then comes a scene in which Gremio, the old suitor, and Hortensio, the commonplace young man, make a compact to do their best to get a husband for Katharine, — Hortensio remarking that there were men who "would take her with all faults, were there money enough," and, as Gremio says, "so rid the house of her." Tranio and his young master have overheard all this, and being left upon the street alone, the latter breaks out into schoolboy expressions of rapturous love for Bianca, and they enter into a plot that Lucentio shall offer to become one of her teachers, while Tranio, nothing loath, keeps house in Padua, and passes for the son of his master, old Vincentio. He does this with a toadyish declaration that it is all out of obedience to Vincentio, and love for Lucentio. Biondello, the lackey, is instructed to wait on Tranio as his master.

Here Sly breaks in: "Is there any more of it?" "My lord," is the reply, "'t is but begun." "'T is a very excellent piece of work, madam lady," says Sly to his pretended wife: "would it were done!"

Scene 2.

Now enters Petruchio, come to Padua to see Hortensio. Petruchio is a witty, wilful, and eccentric gentleman, — a true gentleman in spite of his assumed roughness, which is more than can be said for sleek Gremio and Hortensio. If he *does* pull his servants' ears when inclined for horse-play, they all love him. We are sure Tranio would betray his masters if any one would make it worth his while to do so; but old Grumio would be faithful on the rack to Petruchio. By the way, we owe Shakspeare a grudge for having two names so much alike in this play, though their wearers are so different, — Gremio and Grumio.

Grumio, Petruchio's servant, is as eccentric as his master. He began the quips that ended in his thrashing; he would rather any time take a cuff than miss a joke; but Hortensio cannot take a joke; all with him is dead commonplace, and *au grand serieux*. Petruchio, flushed with his new wealth, and possibly by his new liberty (for somehow one fancies his father had been a curmudgeon), is "up to anything."

> Crowns in my purse I have, and goods at home,
> And so am come abroad to see the world.

He is no fortune-hunter. *He* is above suspicion on that point, and therefore he can afford to make merry and to declare that above all things in a wife he is going to look out for money, — *fanfaron des vices qu'il n'avait pas*, like Byron.

But unlike poor Byron, Petruchio's boasts are in sheer frolic and high spirits. The world is smiling on Petruchio; it never smiled on Byron. Besides, I think he knows the somewhat horrified Hortensio to be a real fortune-hunter. Hortensio, without perceiving any allusion to himself, replies: —

> Petruchio, shall I then come roundly to thee
> And wish thee to a shrewd ill-favored wife?
> Thou 'd'st thank me but a little for my counsel.
> And yet I 'll promise thee she shall be rich,
> And very rich; — but thou 'rt too much my friend,
> And I 'll not wish thee to her.

Petruchio enters at once into the thing as a joke, and declares that no matter how ugly, how old, how curst, or shrewish she may be, so long as she has money, she will suit him.

How often have we heard the same kind of jesting declaration made; but never by man or maid in *earnest.*

Grumio takes up the joke, partly out of ill-humor at his recent beating; but Hortensio, taking all in solemn part, goes on: —

> I can, Petruchio, help thee to a wife
> With wealth enough, and young, and beauteous,
> Brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman;
> Her only fault is that she is intolerably curst;
> *I* would not wed her for a mine of gold.

Poor Katharine! brought up amongst such a set as those who surround her, — Baptista, "the affable and courteous gentleman" as Hortensio calls him, who is in reality, calculating, selfish, unfatherly, and indelicate; the sly Bianca; the fortune-hunting suitors, — universally unpopular, and mistrusted, — no wonder she is a grown-up spoilt child, and she

thoroughly acts up to her reputation. She — so far more highly endowed intellectually and in heart than these artificial, selfish, commonplace people — is yet conscious of having won their scorn by her want of self-control; and they are rather pleased to find themselves on some points her superiors, and are ready enough to thrust the conviction home upon her. "For," says the author of "Shakspeare Talks with Uncritical People," in the "Monthly Packet," "everything is upside down with her; and to her feeling nothing can happen rightly, as she has got out of her own control, and that of everybody else. . . . She is not able to manage herself, and is too strong for those about her. Baptista has no authority and Bianca no influence over her; so there is no check to her wild passion. . . . In fact, Katharine does not know what to do with her unhappy, irritable self, she is half-crazy with long-indulged temper, and while she is in this condition nothing can please or soothe her. In her rages one is half sorry for her, as one is for a child, or an animal in a passion; it is so much worse for her than for the objects of the storm." Petruchio, eager to be doing something, is piqued and amused by Hortensio's account of this spoilt beauty whom nobody can tame. He was joking at first, but soon begins to take an interest in Kate, and, finding Baptista was an old friend of his father, he presses Hortensio to introduce him to her family. Hortensio is quite honest, — he has conscientiously warned his friend, — but as he *will* run into danger, he begs him to introduce him in his turn into the house, disguised as a music-teacher offering his services to the young ladies.

Before Petruchio can give any answer (and ten to one he would have refused, for he was a man who liked everything

open and above board) Gremio came in, with Lucentio disguised as a classical professor.

Grumio instantly, as if in answer to his master's thought, cries out: "*This* is no knavery! See; to beguile the old folks how the young folks lay their heads together! Master, master, look about you. Who goes there? ha?"

He has recognized Lucentio. Hortensio, mistaking him, thinks he is alluding to old Gremio, and says, "Peace, Grumio, 't is the rival of my love." To which Grumio replies, ironically, "A proper stripling, and an amorous!"

Then comes a scene where Gremio, who is to introduce Lucentio to Baptista, instructs him how he may dispose Bianca in his favor; and thinking only of money, imagines well-bound books will have an effect upon her. Grumio standing by grumbles at Gremio as "an old ass," and can hardly be persuaded to keep a civil tongue. When Gremio perceives his rival Hortensio, he boasts that he has stolen a march on him by having provided a teacher for Bianca; but Hortensio, assures him *he* has met a gentleman who has promised to provide her with a music-master; and then goes on to say he thinks he has also found a suitor for Katharine. "Hortensio, have you told him all her faults?" says Gremio. Here Petruchio, without introduction, breaks in impatiently. I think he is beginning to feel sorry for Kate, surrounded as she is by a set of fools. "I know," he says, "she is an irksome, brawling scold; if that be all, masters, I hear no harm." And indeed, Petruchio is right; there are worse faults by far than a quick temper. Then, too, he is pleased to think there is a task before him, — and he feels equal to it. Imagination has a great deal to do with a man's love, and Petruchio is beginning to think fair Kate "a foeman worthy of his steel."

Grumio too, who has unbounded faith in his master's ability to get his own way, begins to be of the same opinion. Rich, beautiful, well-nurtured, and subdued by Petruchio, why should not the lady prove a blessing to the family? — ay, more of a blessing than one who had Petruchio under her thumb, if that were possible; as it might be if the match were made purely for love. Petruchio ends a speech about the impotency of a woman's tongue with "Tush, tush, fright boys with bugs!" — that is, þug-bears. Hortensio, stupidly honest, here remarks to Gremio that he had promised they should together bear all the courting expenses of Petruchio. "Ay," says Gremio cautiously, "provided he win her." Petruchio says nothing. We may be sure he was too much a gentleman to accept the proposition.

Here enters Tranio, dressed up splendidly as Lucentio, and attended by the lackey Biondello. He inquires the way to Baptista Minola's house — "he that has two fair daughters." Gremio pricks up his ears and fears another suitor to Bianca. Petruchio cries out, "Not her that chides, at any hand I pray." Then ensues a wrangle between the suitors of Bianca, in the course of which something disparaging is said of Kate. But Kate is no longer defenceless; Petruchio stands up for her, and once more comes from Bianca's suitors an offer of pecuniary compensation, should he succeed in getting Katharine out of their way. To which offer Petruchio, disgusted, says never a word.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

We next find ourselves in Baptista's house; and here Katharine, fretted and humiliated, gives way to one of her worst tantrums. Bianca is completely cowed. I think it is not so

much amiability as thorough fear of rousing the vexed devil in Kate, which makes her so mealy-mouthed and submissive. Kate is bent on finding out which suitor Bianca cares the most for, and is carrying out her purpose with a high hand.

In the midst of the brawl Baptista enters with, as usual, gibes for the elder sister, pity for the younger one. It is perfectly true that a "soft answer turneth away wrath;" but there are also times, when, as Katharine says: "Silence and patience seem to flout the wrong-doer," — especially when the offender feels well assured they spring from fear. Then Katharine turns upon her father: Yes, he cares to provide a husband for Bianca! She, Katharine, his eldest, will "dance barefoot on her sister's wedding day, and so lead apes in hell" (signs of old maidenhood). Not that Katharine would bear to be bartered away by Baptista like Bianca.

In her wrath, which Baptista's scolding only makes worse, Kate is utterly unreasonable, for her father had really set aside Bianca's suitors for her sake; but she is so beside herself, poor girl, that she does not pause for reason, and Baptista, at his wits' ends, can only wring his hands.

"There is something very funny," says the writer in the "Monthly Packet," "in the way Petruchio marches in upon him, saying, as it were, 'Good morning; I wish to marry your daughter,' even before telling his own name. Baptista, we know, is not sentimental, but he seems startled at this way of going to work; and fussy old Gremio is quite aghast at the new comer's coolness, not only in his abrupt proposals, wherein Tranio (the false Lucentio) promptly imitates him, but in introducing a tutor for the young ladies before he has been two minutes in the house. However, Baptista gladly

catches at any suitor for Katharine, and would doubtless have treated the proposal with dignified consideration had not the irrepressible Petruchio cut in with the bluntest questions as to the lady's dowry, and expressed his wish to get to the point at once." Indeed, I fancy he wanted to have as little as possible to do with Katharine's relations, especially her father. But though Petruchio is mercenary in his talk, it is in talk only. He instantly proposes to settle on his wife an equivalent for her dowry, — a matter that Bianca's suitors haggle over.

When Baptista doubts if Petruchio can win his daughter's love, he replies confidently : —

> I am as peremptory as she proud-minded;
> And when two raging fires meet together,
> They do consume the thing that feeds their fury.

At this moment Hortensio rushes in with his head broken. Katharine, who, I think, recognized him under his disguise, had flown out at him. She "owed him one," and more than *one*, for his insolence to her in the first scene of the first act; and she pays it with interest. I am inclined to think she hated and despised Hortensio, even more than she did old Gremio.

This scene only quickens Petruchio's desire to get to work at his task of subjugation; and he gladly accepts Baptista's proposal to send his daughter to confer with him.

> *Baptista.* Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,
> Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you ?
> *Petruchio.* I pray you, do; I will attend her here,
> [*Exeunt Baptista, Gremio, Tranio, and Hortensio.*
> And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
> Say that she rail; why, then I 'll tell her plain,

She sings as sweetly as a nightingale;
Say that she frowns; I 'll say she looks as clear
As morning roses newly washed with dew.
Say she be mute, and will not speak a word;
Then I 'll commend her volubility,
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence.
If she do bid me pack, I 'll give her thanks,
As though she bid me stay by her a week.
If she deny to wed, I 'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.
But here she comes; and now, Petruchio, speak.

[*Enter Katharine.*

Good morrow, Kate; for that 's your name, I hear.

Katharine. Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing,
They call me Katharine, that do talk of me.

Petruchio. You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,
Kate of Kate-hall, my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all cates; and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me. Kate of my consolation,
Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded
(Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs),
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

Katharine. Moved! in good time; let him that moved you hither
Remove you hence.

The scene that follows is capital. At every point Kate finds herself checkmated. Hitherto, her quick wit had given her the advantage, in every encounter with the commonplace simpletons about her, whom she cowed with her words, yet who stung and galled her. Moreover, every one was as insolent to her as he dared to be; reproaches and bad words had all her life been heaped upon her; and here indeed is a contrast, — a gentleman whose wits are keener than her own; one not only not afraid of her, but bent on making her fear him; and further, one who treats her, not

with contumely, but with deference and admiration. No wonder, as sailors say, he takes the wind out of her sails. It is also certain that any treatment that is new to an habitual offender has the greatest effect on him. Thus, kindness, to those used to be treated brutally; sharpness, to those habitually indulged and spoiled; boldness, with those accustomed to domineer, almost always prevail. All these novelties Petruchio tries with Katharine. He begins with sharp contradiction, and she cannot stop him; with flattery, to which she is all unused; with an interchange of wits, in which he conquers; with a *soupçon* of brute force, when he seizes her wrist and kisses her. He thinks, perhaps, he has gone too far, and calls her, — "Come back, good Kate. I am a gentleman." At this she boxes his ears. He wins, however, even in this challenge, declaring, "I swear I 'll cuff you if you strike again!" Then off he goes again in a quick interchange of wits, which Kate, although the loser, enjoys as something to which she is unaccustomed; so that, when he puts his arm around her again, she only cries: "I chafe you if I tarry, — let me go!" The spell has begun to work. Then he breaks forth with flatteries, and ends by making believe that the world had reported her to be slightly lame. With that she sweeps across the stage, in all her queenliness, bent upon showing herself to him at her best, and he breaks forth in genuine admiration. Then, pressing his advantage, he announces that she is as good as his wife already; that the dowry is agreed upon; and that, will she, nill she, he who is born to tame her means to be married on Sunday.

Katharine. I chafe you if I tarry, — let me go.
Petruchio. No, not a whit; I find you passing gentle.
'T was told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar,
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers;
Thou canst not frown; thou canst not look askance,
Nor bite the lip as angry wenches will,
Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk;
But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers,
With gentle conference, soft and affable.
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?
O, slanderous world! Kate, like the hazel twig,
Is straight and slender, and as brown in hue
As hazel nuts, and sweeter than the kernels.
O! let me see thee walk. Thou dost not halt.

Katharine. Go, fool! and whom thou keep'st command.

Petruchio. Did ever Dian so become a grove
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?
O! be thou Dian, and let her be Kate,
And then let Kate be chaste, and Dian sportful!

Katharine. Where did you study all this goodly speech?

Petruchio. It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

Katharine. A witty mother! witless else her son.

Petruchio. Am I *not* wise? . . . But, Kate,
Thus in plain terms: Your father hath consented
That you shall be my wife; your dower 's agreed on;
And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.
Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn.
For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty
(Thy beauty, that doth make me like thee well),
Thou must be married to no man but me.
For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,
And bring you from a wild-cat to a Kate
Conformable, as other household Kates.
Here comes your father. Never make denial;
I must and will have Katharine for my wife.

Here enters Baptista, with Gremio and Tranio. Kate, hotly displeased at hearing that all has been settled without her consent, gives a very false account of the interview, declaring Petruchio had behaved "like one half-lunatic, a

mad-cap ruffian, and a swearing Jack." Then Petruchio pays her off with a still falser account of her own behavior: —

> Father, 't is thus. Yourself and all the world
> That talked of her, have talked amiss of her.
> If she be curst it is for policy.
> For she 's not froward, but modest as the dove;
> She is not hot, but temperate as the morn;
> For patience she will prove a second Grizzel;
> And Roman Lucrece for her chastity.
> And to conclude, — we 've 'greed so well together
> That upon Sunday is the wedding-day.

Then, while Kate is still bewildered by the audacity of his assertions, he seizes her hand, and by way of giving her to understand he is no fortune-hunter, and also to get rid of her relations, and avoid occasions of dispute, he announces his intention of going at once to Venice, and bringing such things as women love, to deck his bride.

To some gibes on the part of Gremio and Tranio, he replies: —

> Be patient, gentlemen; I choose her for myself.
> If she and I be pleased, what 's that to you?
> 'T is bargained 'twixt us twain, being alone,
> That she shall still be curst in company.
> I tell you, 't is incredible to believe
> How much she loves me. O! the kindest Kate! —
> She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss
> She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,
> That in a twink she won me to her love.
> O! you are novices. 'T is a world to see
> How tame, when men and women are alone,
> The veriest wretch can make the curstest shrew.
> Give me thy hand, Kate. I will unto Venice
> To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding-day.

Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests;
I will be sure my Katharine shall be fine.
Baptista. I know not what to say. But give me your hands;
God send you joy, Petruchio! 'tis a match.
Gremio and Tranio. Amen, say we; we will be witnesses.
Petruchio. Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu.
I will to Venice; Sunday comes apace.
We will have rings, and things, and fine array;
And kiss me, Kate, we will be married o' Sunday.

Then Kate and Petruchio having left the chamber, there ensues a wholly different scene, — the suit of Bianca's wooers. *She* is not consulted even as much as Katharine, but "he who bids highest shall have her," says her father. Gremio, who is really very rich, gives an inventory of his valuables: —

First, as you know, my house within the city
Is richly furnishèd with plate and gold, —
Basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands,
My hangings all of Tyrian tapestry.
In ivory coffers I have stuffed my crowns;
In cypress chests my arras, counterpoints,
Costly apparel, tents, and canopies,
Fine linen, Turkey cushions, bossed with pearl,
Valance of Venice gold in needlework,
Pewter and brass, and all things that belong
To house or housekeeping. Then at my farm
I have a hundred milch kine to the pail,
Six score fat oxen standing in my stalls,
And all things answerable to this portion.
Myself am struck in years, I must confess;
And if I die to-morrow, this is hers
If, while I live, she will be only mine.

Then Tranio caps every one of Gremio's propositions, drawing the long bow even as regards the wealth of Vincentio, Lucentio's father. But Gremio hesitates as to his wife's jointure. Baptista accepts Tranio as the highest bidder, on

condition that his (supposed) father, Vincentio, ratifies his promises; which Gremio is certain no old Italian fox will ever do.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

Bianca is alone with her two lovers, Lucentio and Hortensio, disguised as teachers. Lucentio knows Hortensio, but Hortensio is in the dark concerning Lucentio. The lesson scene is a very pretty one. The two tutors each want the exclusive attention of their charming scholar, who puts them in their proper places with pretty resolution. Hortensio is set to tune his lute, while Lucentio reads out lines of Virgil, and construes them in her ear with love-making, as: "*Hac ibat*, as I told you before; *Simois*, I am Lucentio; *hic est*, son of Vincentio of Pisa; *Sigeas tellus*, disguised thus to get your love." "Bianca has a turn for contrivance," says the writer in the "Monthly Packet;" "and we can fancy her sitting with a perfectly demure face while Lucentio rolls out the sounding Latin, and whispers his much more interesting construing of the same. The impatient musician meanwhile fumes to and fro, causing Lucentio to come out with edifying scraps of classical information (such as, 'Sure, Æacides was Ajax,—called so from his grandfather'),—which do not, however, throw his rival off the scent of his secret. Hortensio cannot get anything but mere civility from Bianca; even his original 'gamut' does not make any impression upon her, and he is considerably disgusted and disenchanted."

Scene 2.

This next scene brings us to Sunday, the wedding-day. All is ready in Baptista's house, but Petruchio has not arrived.

Katharine is bitterly mortified and disappointed. She had really liked her bridegroom, and now endeavors to salve over the affront by declaring he was mad, — she had said so from the first. But she is more dignified and reasonable than could have been expected. There is all the woman in her exclamation, as she weeps, "Would Katharine had never seen him, though!"

At this point in rushes Biondello, the lackey, with news that signior Petruchio is at hand, and in this fashion, —

In a new hat and an old jerkin; a pair of old breeches, thrice turned; a pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, the other laced; an old rusty sword ta'en out of the town armory, with a broken hilt; and two broken points, — his horse hipped with an old mothy saddle, the stirrups of no kindred; besides, possessed with the glanders, troubled with the lampas, full of wind-galls, sped with spavins, rayed with the yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers, begnawn with the bots, swayed in the back, and shoulder-shotten, ne'er-legged before, and with a half-checked bit, and a head-stall of sheep's leather, which being restrained to keep him from stumbling hath been often burst, and now repaired with knots; one girth six times pieced, and a woman's crupper of *velours*, which hath two letters left of her name fairly set down in studs, and here and there pieced with packthread!

Baptista. Who comes with him?

Biondello. O, sir, his lackey, for all the world caparisoned like the horse, —with a linen stock on one leg, and a kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and blue list; an old hat and the "Amours in Forty Fancies" pricked in it like a feather. A monster, a very monster in apparel, and not like a Christian foot-boy, or a gentleman's lackey.

The very sound of this speech is breathless. We see Biondello, as we read it, with his eyes popping out of his head. In old editions the paper book which Grumio has twisted up and stuck into his old hat like a feather, is called The Humor of Forty Fancies, and it has puzzled commentators. By

help of the strange, unknown manuscript corrector of the old Folio, that title is now supposed to be a misprint. Drayton, the author of the noble ballad of Agincourt, and the Poly-Olbion from which Shakspeare drew passages in "Midsummer Night's Dream," mysteriously quarrelled with Shakspeare, and it is conjectured that he may have been affronted by the dishonorable use to which his brother author, for a joke, put his "Amours in Quatorzains."

Petruchio makes his blustering appearance as if he had never even heard of the wedding. His first question is, "Who 's at home?" Tranio, who is not a gentleman, comments at once on his apparel. "Were it better, then," cries Petruchio, dashing across the stage, "that I should rush in *thus?*"

Mark throughout this scene the dignity and courtesy of Baptista, old mercenary fool as he is, and the upstart interference of Tranio, and observe how in matters of social intercourse breeding and blood tell.

There is a touch of real feeling — a feeling that I should think might rise in the heart of every bridegroom who had the right stuff in him — in Petruchio's wish that the rents that marred his life were all repaired for the sake of the woman who was henceforth to wear him.

Petruchio. Come, where be those gallants? who 's at home?
Baptista. You are welcome, sir.
Petruchio. And yet I come *not* well.
Baptista. And yet you halt not.
Tranio. Not so well apparelled
As I wish you were.
Petruchio. Were it better I should rush in *thus?*
But where is Kate? where is my lovely bride?
How does my father? Gentles, methinks you frown;

And wherefore gaze this goodly company,
As if they saw some wondrous monument,
Some comet, or unusual prodigy?

Baptista. Why, sir, you know this is your wedding-day.
First we were sad, fearing you would not come;
Now sadder that you come so unprovided.
Fie! doff this habit, shame to your estate,
An eye-sore to our solemn festival.

Tranio. And tell us what occasion of import
Hath all so long detained you from your wife,
And sent you hither so unlike yourself.

Petruchio. Tedious it were to tell, and harsh to hear.
Sufficeth I am come to keep my word,
Though in some part enforcèd to digress;
Which at more leisure I will so excuse
That you shall all be satisfied withal.
But where is Kate? I stay too long from her.
The morning wears; 't is time we were at church.

Tranio. See not your bride in these irreverent robes.
Go to my chamber; put on clothes of mine.

Petruchio. Not I, believe me; *thus* I 'll visit her.

Baptista. But thus, I trust, you will not marry her.

Petruchio. Good sooth, e'en thus! therefore have done with words;
To *me* she 's married, not unto my clothes.
Could I repair what she will wear in me
As I can change these poor accoutrements
'T were well for Kate, and better for myself, —
But what a fool I am to chat with you
When I should bid good-morrow to my bride,
And seal the title with a loving kiss.

When Baptista, Petruchio, Grumio, and the lackey go out, Tranio (whom I detest) has a few words apart with Lucentio about their plans. *He* proposes to substitute a false Vincentio, and actually to swindle Baptista out of his Bianca. Lucentio, we are happy to find, prefers an honest runaway marriage.

Tranio. But, sir, to *her* love concerneth us to add
Her father's liking. Which to bring to pass,

As I before imparted to your worship,
I am to get a man, — whate'er he be
It skills not much, we 'll fit him to our turn, —
And he shall be Vincentio of Pisa,
And make assurance here in Padua
Of greater sums than I have promisèd.
So shall you quietly enjoy your hope,
And marry sweet Bianca with consent.

Lucentio. Were it not that my fellow-schoolmaster
Doth watch Bianca's steps so narrowly,
'T were good, methinks, to steal our marriage;
Which once performed, let all the world say — No!
I 'll keep mine own despite of all the world.

While they converse comes in old Gremio. He has been present at the mad-cap wedding. Here is the scene. Mark still the impudence and want of courteous feeling in Tranio.

Tranio. Signior Gremio! came you from the church?

Gremio. As willingly as e'er I came from school.

Tranio. And is the bride and bridegroom coming home?

Gremio. A bridegroom, say you? 'T is a groom indeed;
A grumbling groom, and that the girl shall find.

Tranio. Curster than she? Why! 't is impossible.

Gremio. Why, he 's a devil — a devil, the very fiend.

Tranio. Why she 's a devil — a devil, the devil's dam.

Gremio. Tut! she 's a lamb, a dove, a fool to him.
I 'll tell you, sir Lucentio: When the priest
Should ask if Katharine should be his wife,
"Ay! by gogs-wounds!" quoth he, and swore so loud
That, all amazed, the priest let fall the book;
And as he stooped again to pick it up,
The mad-brained bridegroom took him such a cuff
That down fell priest and book, and book and priest.
"Now take them up," quoth he, "if any list."

Tranio. What said the wench when he arose again?

Gremio. Trembled and shook, for why, he stamped and swore,
As if the vicar meant to cozen him.
But after many ceremonies done,

He calls for wine: "A health," quoth he, as if
He had been aboard, carousing to his mates
After a storm, — quaffed off the muscadel,
And threw the sops all in the sexton's face,
Having no other reason, so he said,
But that his beard grew thin and hungerly,
And seemed to ask him sops as he was drinking.
This done, he took the bride about the neck,
And kissed her lips with such a clamorous smack
That at the parting all the church did echo.
I, seeing this, came hence for very shame,
And after me I know the rout is coming;
Such a mad marriage never was before.
Hark! hark! I think I hear the minstrels play.

The "rout," as Gremio calls it, comes in, and we may remark Petruchio in the character of a gentleman; for a moment he lays aside his foolery. It is really necessary he should carry off Katharine at once; and though we are sorry he should refuse her first request, asked mildly, we see that he has reason on his side. We may note too that Baptista, the real host, does not join in Tranio's officious invitation to stay to dinner. I think he was glad to be rid of the incomprehensible, disorderly pair. But Katharine, the wife, makes her first effort at self-assertion, and is utterly foiled. Under a mask of boundless devotion to her interests, exacting for his wife a deference and attention she is little accustomed to, and with words of lover's fondness, Petruchio insists on having his own way — ay, and on his *right* to have it too. He has right and power on his side, and treats his wife to a burlesque assertion of that right, till Katharine is utterly bewildered, and Baptista is thankful to be left in peace. "We may remark," says the writer in the "Monthly Packet," "that this is the only time that Petruchio distinctly claims authority to force Kate to do what she dislikes. When once

he has so far mastered her, all his future operations are veiled under the appearance of considering her wishes, and what is good for her. He knows that to lose his temper would be to give her an advantage over him, and besides, being a good fellow and a gentleman, he would never dream of really hurting her."

Petruchio. Gentlemen and friends, I thank you for your pains.
I know you think to dine with me to-day,
And have prepared great store of wedding cheer;
But so it is, my haste doth call me hence,
And therefore here I mean to take my leave.
Baptista. Is 't possible you will away to-night?
Petruchio. I must away to-day, before night comes.
Make it no wonder; if you knew my business
You would entreat me rather go than stay.
And, honest company, I thank you all
That have beheld me give myself away
To this most patient, sweet, and virtuous wife.
Dine with my father, drink a health to me,
For I must hence; and farewell to you all.
Tranio. Let us entreat you stay till after dinner.
Petruchio. It may not be.
Gremio. Let me entreat you.
Petruchio. It cannot be.
Katharine. Let *me* entreat you.
Petruchio. I am content.
Katharine. Are you content to *stay?*
Petruchio. I am content you should entreat me stay,
But yet not stay, entreat me how you can.
Katharine. Now, if you love me, stay.
Petruchio. Grumio! My horses.
Katharine. Nay, then,
Do what thou canst, I will not go to-day;
No, nor to-morrow, nor till I please myself.
The door is open, sir, — there lies your way.
For me, I 'll not be gone 'till I please myself.
'T is like you 'll prove a jolly surly groom,
That take it on you at the first so roundly.

Petruchio. O, Kate, content thee ; prithee, be not angry.
Katharine. I *will* be angry ! What hast thou to do ?
Father, be quiet ! he shall stay my leisure.
Gremio. Ay, marry, sir ; now it begins to work !
Katharine. Gentlemen, forward to the bridal dinner ;
I see a woman may be made a fool
If she had not the spirit to resist.
Petruchio. They shall go forward, Kate, at thy command.
Obey the bride, you that attend on her,
Go to the feast, revel and domineer.
Be mad and merry — or go hang yourselves ;
But for my bonny Kate, she must with me.
Nay, look not big, nor stamp, nor stare, nor fret ;
I will be master of what is mine own.
She is my goods, my chattels ; she 's my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.
And here she stands ; touch her whoever dare !
I 'll bring my action on the proudest he
That stops my way in Padua. Grumio !
Draw forth thy weapon ; we 're beset with thieves !
Rescue thy mistress if thou be'st a man !
Fear not, sweet wench ; they shall not touch thee, Kate ;
I 'll buckler thee against a million.
[*Exeunt Petruchio, Katharine, and Grumio.*

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

" The wit and spirit of the play increase perceptibly after we leave Padua and go home with the bridal pair." Grumio is the kind of old servant we have all seen in the Uncle Remus days on southern plantations, — an inveterate grumbler, but absolutely identified with his master and all his master's interests, except when those interests interfere with Grumio's own notions of what is due to himself. Kate, being his master's wife, is now a part of his master, and as such is entitled to all reasonable consideration. Grumio never complains of *her*, and doubtless all his life Katharine was faithful

to him, and he loyal to his mistress. Nevertheless, it is she who will have to put up with his sulks and his tantrums, not he with hers. But here is the scene, with the story Grumio refused to tell, but told, pretending not to tell it. I am sure Petruchio knew his Katharine was all safe before he fell to beating Grumio because her horse stumbled. Notice the fun the elder servant makes of Curtis for using pompous words.

Grumio [*entering a hall in Petruchio's country-house*]. Fie, fie, on all tired jades! on all mad masters! and all foul ways! was ever man so beaten? was ever man so weary? I am sent before to make a fire, and they are coming after to warm them. Now, were not I

A little pot,
And soon hot,

my very lips might freeze to my teeth, and my tongue to the roof of my mouth, my heart in my belly ere I should come by a fire to thaw me. But I with blowing the fire shall warm myself, for, considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold. Holla! Ho. . a! Curtis!

Curtis. Who is that, calls so coldly?

Grumio. A piece of ice. If thou doubt it thou mayst slide from my shoulder to my heel. A fire, good Curtis!

Curtis. Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

Grumio. O! ay, Curtis, and therefore, fire — fire!

Curtis. Is she so hot a shrew as she 's reported?

Grumio. She was, good Curtis, before this frost. But thou knowest winter tames man, woman, and beast; for it hath tamed my old master, and my new mistress, and myself, fellow Curtis.

Curtis. I prithee, good Grumio, tell me — how goes the world?

Grumio. A cold world, Curtis, in every office but thine, and therefore, fire! Do thy duty, and have thy duty, for my master and mistress are almost frozen to death.

Curtis. There 's fire ready; and therefore, good Grumio, the news?

Grumio. But where 's the cook? Is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept, the serving-men in their new fustian, and every officer his wedding-garment on? Be the jacks

fair within, the jills fair without, the carpets laid, and everything in order?

Curtis. All ready; and therefore, I pray thee, news.

Grumio. First, know my horse is tired, and my master and mistress fallen out.

Curtis. How?

Grumio. Out of their saddles into the dirt; and thereby hangs a tale.

Curtis. Let 's ha' it, good Grumio.

Grumio. Lend thine ear.

Curtis. Here.

Grumio. *There!* [*Strikes him.*] This cuff was but to knock at your ear and beseech listening; now I 'll begin: *Imprimis*, we came down a foul hill, my master riding behind my mistress. . . .

Curtis. Both on one horse?

Grumio. Tell thou the tale! — But hadst thou not crossed me, thou shouldst have heard how her horse fell, and she under her horse. Thou shouldst have heard in how miry a place; how she was bemoiled; how he left her with the horse upon her; how he beat me because her horse stumbled; how she waded through the dirt to pluck him off me; how he swore; how she prayed, that never prayed before; how I cried; how the horses ran away; how my bridle was burst; how I lost my crupper, — with many things of worthy memory; which now shall die in oblivion, and thou return inexperienced to thy grave.

Curtis. By this reckoning he is more shrew than she.

Grumio. Ay; and that you and the proudest of you all shall find when he comes home. But what talk I of this? Call forth Nathaniel, Joseph, Nicholas, Philip, Walter, Sugarsop, and the rest. Let their heads be sleekly combed, their blue coats brushed, and their garters of an indifferent knit. Let them courtesy with their left legs, and not presume to touch a hair of my master's horse-tail till they kiss their hands. Are they all ready?

Then enter Katharine and Petruchio. The poor girl is cold, weary, draggled, hungry, frightened. Petruchio begins by storming at the servants, whom he expected to meet him in the park, and Grumio, who has really wasted his time telling his story to Curtis, bursts forth with a string of false excuses.

It is a handsome house, with a park, and retainers in abundance, that the bridegroom has brought his Kate to. She has married *a good fellow and a gentleman,* — a rich man, well considered, and a man of wit and parts fully equal to her own. She has made an excellent match, when she could not have expected it, and had almost made up her mind that she was to die single; and now he is going to show her how ill-temper can mar everything. He loses no time in calling for supper, over which (though she is to eat none of it) poor Kate is invited to say grace.

Petruchio. Go rascals, go, and fetch my supper in.
[*Sings.*] Where is the life that late I led?
Where are those — Sit down, Kate, and welcome.
[*Re-enter servants, with supper.*
Nay, good, sweet Kate, be merry.
Off with my boots, you rogues! you villains! When?
[*Sings.*] It was the friar of orders gray,
As he forth walked upon his way —
Out! out! you rogue, you pluck my foot awry.
[*Strikes him.*] Take that, and mend the plucking off the other.
Be merry, Kate. Some water here! What, ho!
Where's my spaniel, Troilus? Sirrah, get you hence,
And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither, —
One, Kate, that you must kiss, and be acquainted with.
Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?
Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.
[*Servant lets the ewer fall. Strikes him.*
Katharine. Patience, I pray you; 't was a fault unwilling.
Petruchio. A careless, beetle-headed, flap-eared knave.
Come, Kate, sit down; I know you have a stomach.
Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I?
What is this — mutton?
1 *Servant.* Ay.
Petruchio. Who brought it?
1 *Servant.* I.
Petruchio. 'T is burnt; and so, I swear, is all the meat!
What dogs are these? — where is the rascal cook?

How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser,
And serve it thus to me who love it not?
There! take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all!
[*Throws the meat, etc., about the stage.*
You heedless jolt-heads and unmannered slaves!
What, do you grumble? I 'll be with you straight!
Katharine. I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet;
The meat was well, if you were so contented.
Petruchio. I tell thee, Kate, 't was burnt, and dried away,
And I expressly am forbid to touch it;
For it engenders choler, planteth anger,
And better 't were that both of us did fast, —
Since of ourselves, ourselves are choleric, —
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.
Be patient; to-morrow it shall be mended,
And for this night we 'll fast for company.
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.
[*Exeunt Petruchio, Katharine, and Curtis.*
Nathaniel [*advancing*]. Peter, didst ever see the like?
Peter. He kills her in her own humor.
[*Re-enter Curtis.*
Grumio. Where is he?
Curtis. In her chamber, making a sermon to her.
And rails and swears and rates, that she, poor fool,
Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak,
And sits as one new-risen from a dream.

Scene 2.

Now we return to Padua, to Baptista's house, where Tranio (the false Lucentio) brings Hortensio to hear the real Lucentio making love to Bianca. Hortensio, disgusted at her carrying on a flirtation with a mere music master, swears to give her up if Tranio (the false Lucentio) will too. The littleness of Hortensio comes out at every word, as the want of the true gentleman does in Tranio. After Hortensio goes out the whole party seem to be in league with one another. Biondello rushes in with news that he has seen an old travel-

ler coming into town who will do to personate Vincentio, Lucentio's father; and Tranio carries out his lackey's plot, persuading an old pedant, on his way to Tripoli (where much Arab learning was to be acquired in those days), to come to his house and to personate Vincentio.

Scene 3.

We go back to Petruchio's country-seat, and find poor Katharine beseeching Grumio to get her a morsel to eat; but she is in a house where all are faithful to the master. It was cruel to mock her with the mustard, but let us hope Grumio knew that her dinner was soon coming.

Grumio. No, no, forsooth; I dare not, for my life.
Katharine. The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.
What! did he marry me to famish me?
Beggars that come unto my father's door
Upon entreaty have a present alms;
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity.
But I — who never knew how to entreat,
Nor never needed what I should entreat —
Am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep,
With oaths kept waking, and with brawling fed.
And that which spites me more than all these wants,
He does it under name of perfect love;
As who should say, if I should sleep or eat
'T were deadly sickness, or 't were present death.
I prithee go and get me some repast, —
I care not what, so it be wholesome food.
Grumio. What say you to a neat's foot?
Katharine. 'T is passing good. I pray you let me have it.
Grumio. I fear it is too choleric a meat, —
How say you to a fat tripe finely broiled?
Katharine. I like it well; good Grumio, fetch it me.
Grumio. I cannot tell; I fear 't is choleric.
What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?
Katharine. A dish that I do love to feed upon.

Grumio. Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.
Katharine. Why, then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.
Grumio. Nay, then, I will not; you shall have the mustard,
Or else you get no beef from Grumio.
Katharine. Then both, or one, or anything thou wilt.
Grumio. Why, then, the mustard without the beef.
Katharine [*beating him*]. Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding knave,
That feed'st me with the very name of meat.
Sorrow on thee, and all the pack of you,
That triumph thus upon my misery!
Go! get thee gone, I say.

[*Enter Petruchio, with a dish of meat, and Hortensio.*

Petruchio. How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amort?
Hortensio. Mistress, what cheer?
Katharine. Faith, as cold as can be.
Petruchio. Pluck up thy spirits, look cheerfully upon me.
Here, love, thou seest how diligent I am,
To dress the meat myself, and bring it thee.
I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.
What, not a word? Nay, then, thou lov'st it not;
And all my pains is sorted to no proof;
Here! take away this dish.
Katharine. Pray you, let it stand.
Petruchio. The poorest service is repaid with thanks;
And so shall mine, before you touch the meat.
Katharine. I thank you, sir.
Hortensio. Signior Petruchio, fie!—you are to blame;
Come, Mistress Kate, I 'll bear you company.
Petruchio [*aside*]. Eat it all up, Hortensio, if you love me.
Much good do it, Kate, to thy gentle heart,
But eat apace. And now, my bonny love,
Will we return unto thy father's house,
And revel it as bravely as the best, —
With silken coats, and caps, and golden rings;
With ruffs, and cuffs, and fardingales, and things;
With scarfs, and fans, and double change of bravery;
With amber bracelets, beads and all this knavery.
What, hast thou dined? The tailor stays thy leisure,
To deck thy body with his ruffling treasure.

One hardly knows what brought Hortensio to that country place, unless it were that, wanting to draw off from Bianca, he sought Petruchio as one who was under obligation to him. He was petty enough, too, to be willing to indulge a prying curiosity. Now comes the inimitable scene with the tailor and haberdasher. Kate is not wholly tamed. Two things embolden her, — the dinner she has eaten, and the presence of Hortensio. It is wonderful how the presence of one who we are sure must be thinking us ill-used will give us courage. Observe, Petruchio will wrong no man by his capers; the tailor is to be assured at once he will be fully paid. Haberdasher, by the way, is a term still used in England for one who sells silk goods, ribands, etc.; but it appears in Shakspeare's time to have been the synonyme for a man-milliner.

Haberdasher. Here is the cap your worship did bespeak.
Petruchio. Why, this was moulded on a porringer!
A velvet dish! Fie, fie. . . .
Why, 't is a cockle, or a walnut-shell,
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap;
Away with it; come, let me have a bigger.
Katharine. I 'll have no bigger; this doth fit the time,
And gentlewomen wear such caps as these.
Petruchio. When you are gentle you shall have one too,
And not till then.

Here breaks in Hortensio, with an aside, "That will not be in haste." A few days before he would have spoken this aloud, with a sneer; now Katharine is protected from impertinence.

Katharine. Why, sir, I trust I may have leave to speak;
And speak I will. I am no child, no babe;
Your betters have endured me say my mind,
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.

My tongue *will* tell the anger of my heart;
Or else my heart concealing it, will break.
And rather than it shall, I will be free,
E'en to the uttermost — as I please — in words.
Petruchio. Why, thou say'st true; it *is* a paltry cap,
A custard coffin, a bauble, a silken pie;
I love thee well in that thou lik'st it not.
Katharine. Love me, or love me not, I like the cap,
And I *will* have it, or I will have none.
Petruchio. Thy gown? why, ay. Come, tailor, let us see it.
O! mercy! heavens! what masking stuff is here?
What 's this? — a sleeve? 't is like a demi-cannon.
What! up and down, carved like an apple-tart!
Here 's snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and slash,
Like to a censer in a barber's shop.
Why, what o' devil's name, tailor, call'st thou this?
Tailor. You bid me make it orderly and well,
According to the fashion and the time.
Petruchio. Marry, I did; but if you be remembered,
I did not bid you mar it to the time.
Go! hop me over every kennel home,
For you shall hop without my custom, sir;
I 'll none of it. Hence, make the best of it!
Katharine. I never saw a better-fashioned gown, —
More quaint, more pleasing, nor more commendable.
Belike you mean to make a puppet of me?
Petruchio. Why, true; he means to make a puppet of thee.
Tailor. She says *your worship* means to make a puppet of her.
Petruchio. O! monstrous arrogance! Thou liest, thou thread,
Thou thimble,
Thou yard, three quarters, half-yard, quarter, nail, —
Thou flea, thou nit, thou winter cricket thou, —
Braved in mine own house with a skein of thread!
Away, thou rag, thou quantity, thou remnant,
Or I shall so be-mete thee with thy yard
As thou shalt think on prating while thou livest.
I tell thee, I, that thou hast marred her gown.
Tailor. Your worship is deceived; the gown is made
Just as my master had direction.
Grumio gave order how it should be done.

Grumio. I gave him no order; I gave him the stuff.

Tailor. How did you desire it should be made?

Grumio. Marry, sir, with needle and thread.

Tailor. But did you not request to have it cut?

Grumio. I bid thy master cut out the gown, but I did not bid him cut it to pieces.

Tailor. Why, here is the note of the fashion to testify.

Petruchio. Read it.

Tailor. Imprimis, a loose-bodied gown. . . .

Grumio. Master, if ever I said loose-bodied gown, sew me in the skirts of it, and beat me to death with a hank of brown thread; I said a gown.

Petruchio. Proceed.

Tailor. With a small compassed cape. . . .

Grumio. I confess the cape.

Tailor. With a trunk sleeve. . .

Grumio. I confess two sleeves.

Tailor. The sleeves curiously cut. . . .

Petruchio. Ay, there 's the villany!

Grumio. Error in the bill, sir — error in the bill. I commanded the sleeves should be cut out and sewed up again, and that I 'll prove upon thee, tailor's boy, though thy little finger be armed with a thimble. . . .

Petruchio [*aside*]. Hortensio, say thou wilt see the tailor paid. — [*Aloud.*] Go! take it hence; begone, and say no more.

Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's
E'en in these honest, mean habiliments.
Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor;
For 't is the mind that makes the body rich;
And, as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honor peereth in the meanest habit.
What, is the jay more precious than the lark
Because his feathers are more beautiful?
Or is the adder better than the eel
Because his painted skin contents the eye?
O, no, good Kate. Neither art thou the worse
For this poor furniture and mean array.
If thou account'st it shame lay it on me;
And therefore, frolic. We will hence forthwith,
To feast and sport us at thy father's house.

Go call my men, and let us straight to him.
And bring our horses unto Long-lane end;
There will we mount, and thither walk afoot.
Let 's see. I think 't is now some seven o'clock,
And well we may come there by dinner-time.
Katharine. I dare assure you, sir, 't is almost two,
And 't will be supper-time ere you come there.
Petruchio. It *shall* be seven ere I go to horse.
Look! what I speak, or do, or think to do,
You are still crossing it. Sirs, let 't alone;
I will not go to-day. And ere I do,
It shall be what o'clock I say it is.
Hortensio. Why, so! this gallant will command the sun!

And on this hint does Petruchio subsequently act. Observe throughout his speech he makes points on which he expects Katharine will oppose him. They will go in shabby clothes, — she says nothing; fine clothes are no better than mean ones, — she does not contradict him; she must frolic, though little inclined for it, — she accepts the suggestion; they will walk through the mud to Long-lane's end, — she makes no objection; nor does she speak till she gently sets him right as to the clock, and then he turns upon her with the only unkind thing he has ever said to her, — putting himself so glaringly and unmistakably in the wrong that she has the comfort of now perceiving the drift of all his former unaccountable behavior.

Scene 4.

This scene discloses a plot for Bianca's betrothal to the false Lucentio, and suggests to the real Lucentio a plan for carrying her off. But for that I strongly suspect Tranio would have out-witted his young master in their "little game."

Scene 5.

This scene takes place upon a public road, on which are travelling Petruchio, his wife, and Hortensio.

Petruchio. Come on, o' Heaven's name; once more toward our father's.
Good Lord! how bright and goodly shines the moon!
Katharine. The moon? — the sun. It is not moonlight now.
Petruchio. I say it is the moon that shines so bright.
Katharine. I know it is the sun that shines so bright.
Petruchio. Now, by my mother's son, and that 's myself,
It shall be moon or star, or what I list,
Or e'er I journey to your father's house.
Go on, and fetch our horses back again.
Evermore crossed and crossed, — nothing but crossed!
Hortensio. Say as he says, or we shall never go.
Katharine. Forward, I pray, since we have come so far, —
And be it moon, or sun, or what you please;
And if you please to call it a rush-candle
Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.
Petruchio. I say it is the moon.
Katharine. I know it is.
Petruchio. Nay, then you lie; it is the blessèd sun.
Katharine. Then, Heaven be blest; it is the blessèd sun, —
But sun it is not when you say it is not;
And the moon changes even as your mind.
What you will have it named, e'en that it is,
And so it shall be so for Katharine.

By this time I think Katharine has comprehended the situation, and has grown ready to play her part in it. She has begun to love and trust her husband, and gives in to his humor. As Petruchio says, "now the ball (or bowl) does not run against the bias;" Kate is entering into the fun of the thing.

The writer in the "Monthly Packet" says: "It is all nonsense to talk as if this bit of merry comedy expresses Shaks-

peare's serious ideas of the proper relations between husband and wife; for when both are drawn in exaggerated style throughout how can we be expected to take their sayings literally? Petruchio's comic demands are matched by Katharine's comic submission, and there is consistency in making her go to the furthest extreme. When once she gives in at all she is just the creature to have no medium. Besides, she has learned to take a joke by this time, and instead of getting angry, she meets her mad-cap husband on his own ground, and gayly tells him she will call the sun a rush-candle rather than fight about it; which is surely a forcible way of expressing that she has recovered control of the temper which has so long run riot, and has begun to love the man who forced her to conquer that fiend. After having managed herself so badly Kate seems to find a relief in letting herself drop completely into Petruchio's rough, but not unkindly hands."

Thus, when old Vincentio appears, travelling on the highway, Petruchio accosts him: —

> Good morrow, gentle mistress. Whither away?
> Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly too,
> Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?
> Such war of white and red within her cheeks!
> What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty
> As those two eyes become that heavenly face!
> Fair, lovely maid, once more good-day to thee;
> Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

Hortensio, utterly incapable of a joke, is aghast at this proposition. But Kate smilingly takes it up, saying: —

> Young, budding virgin, fair, and fresh, and sweet,
> Whither away, or where is thy abode?
> Happy the parents of so fair a child, —

Happier the man whom favorable stars
Allot thee for his lovely bed-fellow.
Petruchio. Why, how now, Kate? I hope thou art not mad!
This is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, withered,
And not a maiden, as thou sayest he is.
Katharine. Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes,
That have been so bedazzled with the sun
That everything I look on seemeth green.
Now I perceive thou art a reverend father;
Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking,
Petruchio. Do, good old grandsire, and withal make known
Which way thou travellest. If along with us
We shall be joyful of thy company.

"To please Petruchio, Katharine has caught up his wild jest on Vincentio, startling the good old man with her strange salutation, and then apologizing neatly and prettily. Indeed, from this point a gentler grace comes over the young beauty, as if her whole nature had become refined by the removal of the one blot, till we hardly recognize the virago of the first scenes." But now her surroundings are so different. Instead of being with people who misunderstand her, and are always ready to deprecate and to depreciate her, she is freed from them, and subject only to a man whom she can thoroughly trust, and with whom she is rapidly becoming in harmony. Compare Petruchio with Mr. Rochester (at one time the model hero of women novelists). The one is wholly selfish, playing upon Jane for his *own* sake, forgetful of others' claims and rights, brutal in his strength, uncertain in his disposition, — nay, not sure of his own mind, and, to my thinking, no gentleman, — drawn, indeed, by one who when she wrote never had had the opportunity to study a gentleman. Is he like our Petruchio? See how, the moment Petruchio is assured of victory (a victory he has won for Kate's best good), he "drops his fantastic

behavior, and treats Vincentio with a frank courtesy, contrasting strongly with his assumed violence."

Act V. *Scene* 1.

All the threads of the story are drawing together. Lucentio and Bianca creep down the street to get married, having been warned by Biondello against Tranio, who gives his master his advice in these quaint words: "I knew a wench married in an afternoon as she went to the garden for parsley to stuff a rabbit, and so may you, sir." On their way to the church they pass Gremio in the darkness. The sham Vincentio, an old pedant, is engaged with Baptista in drawing up the marriage-contract in the house of Tranio; while the party of Petruchio, with the real Vincentio in company, come along the street, and Petruchio courteously points out to the old man where he whom he believes to be Lucentio, lives.

Then comes a complication; for when Vincentio knocks at his son's door and announces himself as his father, the pedant looks out of the window, utterly denies that he has any claim to such relationship, and desires to have him arrested. "Now we are undone," cries the lackey Biondello, recognizing his master. A flat lie being a menial's easiest way out of a scrape, Biondello sticks to it that he never in his life had seen his old master, and the scene grows so comical that Petruchio says: "Prithee, Kate, let's stand aside and see the end of this controversy."

Then comes forward Tranio, and old Vincentio, seeing his fine dress, bursts out upon him: —

O immortal gods! O fine villain! A silken doublet! a scarlet cloak! a conical hat! O! I am undone, I am undone! While I

play the good husband [care-taker] at home, my son and my servant spend all at the university.

Tranio brazens it out. He asserts that old Vincentio is mad. Bianca and Lucentio come in as Vincentio is being carried off to prison, Biondello, the lackey, seeing his young master, cries to him in mortal terror, "O! we are ruined! — and yonder there he is! Deny him, forswear him, or else we are all undone!"

But Lucentio does not this time heed his advice. He rushes to Vincentio and kneeling down before him, prays his pardon. An explanation ensues all round, but Vincentio is furious against that "damnèd villain Tranio," son of a sail-maker, a fellow brought up in his house ever since he was three years old.

Next follows a pretty little scene, almost a love-scene, between Petruchio and his Kate: —

Katharine. Husband, let 's follow to see the end of this ado.
Petruchio. First kiss me, Kate, and we will.
Katharine. What! in the midst of the street?
Petruchio. What! art thou ashamed of me?
Katharine. No, sir, God forbid; but ashamed to kiss.
Petruchio. Why, then let 's home again. Come, sirrah, let 's away.
Katharine. Nay, I 'll give thee a kiss; now, prithee, love, stay.
Petruchio. Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate,
Better once than never, for never too late.

Scene 2.

Then comes the banquet scene at Baptista's house. Hortensio's "widow" is a low-minded, vulgar, impudent woman, who is going entirely to govern her weak husband, and who seeks the earliest opportunity of making herself disagreeable to his friend Petruchio. Her first gibe at the bride, who is supposed to be going to lead her hus-

band a rough road, rouses Katharine. She had been accustomed to such speeches all her life, but in her new home she had almost forgotten them. *Now* she has a husband by her side to take her part, to stand by and strengthen her. The widow is afraid of the combination and gives in. Then follows the famous wager. The ladies having retired to the withdrawing-room, Tranio turns to Petruchio, and with unblushing impudence makes a jest about his choice of a wife: —

> 'T is well, sir, that *you* hunted for yourself,
> 'T is thought your deer does hold you at a bay.

Petruchio receives this impertinence outwardly unruffled. Baptista, very indifferent about his daughter's honor, breaks in: —

> O ho, Petruchio, Tranio hits you now.
> *Lucentio.* I thank thee for that gird, good Tranio.
> *Hortensio.* Confess, confess, hath he not hit you here?
> *Petruchio.* 'A has a little galled me, I confess,
> And as the jest did glance away from me,
> 'T is ten to one it maimed you two outright.
> *Baptista.* Now, in good sadness, son Petruchio,
> I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.
> *Petruchio.* Well, *I* say, No; and therefore, for assurance,
> Let 's each one send unto his wife,
> And he whose wife is most obedient
> To come at first when he doth send for her,
> Shall win the wager which we shall propose.

The wager is settled at one hundred crowns, — Petruchio declaring that though he might venture a small sum upon hawk or hound, he is willing to stake twenty times so much upon his wife. Lucentio first sends for Bianca; Biondello returns with the answer, "My mistress sends you word that she is busy." Hortensio then sends to his wife, "the

widow." The messenger reports, "She says you have some goodly jest in hand. She will not come, she bids you go to her." Then Petruchio despatches Grumio with his message to Katharine. To the amazement of the other husbands, Katharine comes in promptly with, "What is your will, sir, that you send for me?" Petruchio requires her to go back to where Bianca and Hortensio's wife are sitting by the fire, and bring them with her.

> *Lucentio.* Here is a wonder, if you talk of wonder.
> *Hortensio.* And so it is; I wonder what it bodes.
> *Petruchio.* Marry, peace it bodes, and love, and quiet life,
> And awe-full rule, and right supremacy:
> And, to be short, all that is sweet and happy.

It is to be hoped that Lucentio and Hortensio, stimulated by the example of Petruchio, did not attempt to imitate him. As Bro' Terrapin says to Bro' Fox, "Yo' has n't de wisdom — no, an' yo' has n't de strength," — no, and they had n't the same fine material to work upon. Katharine was made of very different stuff from their coarser women.

When Katharine enters, bringing "the froward wives as prisoners to her womanly persuasion," Petruchio's first command to her is to fling off her cap. She knows some jest must be afoot, she knows too there are other caps where that came from, she is pleased to please Petruchio, and to second him in his new fancy. She flings her cap upon the floor. The widow cries, —

> Lord, let me never have a cause to sigh,
> Till I be brought to such a silly pass!

And Bianca exclaims, "Why, what a foolish duty call you this?" Her husband answers her: —

I would *your* duty were as foolish too;
The wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca,
Hath cost me a hundred crowns since supper-time.

Then Petruchio desires Katharine to instruct these brides in their duty to their husbands out of her new experience. Katharine turns to Hortensio's wife, who is glaring at her lord with angry eyes.

Katharine. Fie, fie! unknit that threatening, unkind brow
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.
It blots thy beauty, as frosts bite the meads;
Confounds thy fame, as whirlwinds shake fair buds;
And in no sense is meet or amiable.
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip, or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign, — one that cares for thee
And for thy maintenance; commits his body
To painful labor, both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
While thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks, and true obedience, —
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
E'en such a woman oweth to her husband.
And when she's froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul, contending rebel,
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,
Where they are bound to serve, love, and obey.
Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,

But that our soft conditions, and our hearts,
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word, and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws;
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most, which we least are.
Then vail your prides, for know it is no boot;
And place your hands below your husband's foot;
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

It is plain that after the wedding-party reached Baptista's house, Petruchio had refrained from parading his power over Katharine, and in the general bustle of the feast the change in her has escaped the observation of the others. Indeed, she is surrounded by unobservant people. In the judgment of her former friends she is still the "shrew" she used to be, "and her husband a fit object of sarcastic pity."

What honors the wife honors the husband, all that degrades the wife dishonors him; but the converse is not always part of the proposition. Of the lady in Proverbs it is said that she increases her husband's honor by the honor all men bear to her: "Her husband is known in the gates when he sitteth with the elders of the land."

If it had not been for the impertinence of Hortensio and Tranio, which Petruchio feels it incumbent on him to put a stop to, he might not have contrived the little scene to show them the real new Kate.

The "Monthly Packet's" closing observations on this play shall end our own: —

"Bianca's petulance and the widow's imperiousness are excellent foils for Kate's new-found sweet temper; and how

prettily she begins with them, slyly hinting that they look ugly when they are cross. Of course the vehement girl goes right to the utmost extreme of submission, and pushes her doctrine of the inequality of the sexes as far as it will possibly go. This is just what we might expect from her. And then her fair picture of a man toiling, fighting, enduring, for the woman's safety and comfort, readily leads to the idea of woman's willing tribute of 'love, fair looks, and true obedience to his honest will.' For Kate has no idea of making all the sacrifice come from either side, or of erecting her husband into an Eastern Sultan. . . . If Kate gives in to her husband because she loves him, she is careful to show that it is not because she is inferior to the women she is speaking to. She asserts herself with a delightful little flash of energy, to let them see they need not hope to succeed where she has failed, — in the bad old path of violence and temper. One can fancy the pride with which Petruchio would take her by the hand to lead her away, throwing a merry gibe at the other two bridegrooms."

After the first scene in the first act, Sly and his company cease to make remarks on the performance. It is probable they were allowed to extemporize, and their outside comments and criticisms on the story must have added to the comedy a great deal of rough fun.

There is a mystery in this play which no commentator has thrown light upon: When did Hortensio get married? and why is his bride known to us only under the name of the "Widow"?

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

THIS is one of Shakspeare's Italian stories, with Italian names and an Italian setting; possibly, too (for Shakspeare rarely invented his plots, reserving his invention for all that gives life to them), it had an Italian origin. There is an episode in Ariosto, "Ariodante and Ginevra," a little like it; but there is also a story of Bandello's, with the scene laid in Messina, and Leonato, Don Pedro, and Borachio among the names of the personages, that more probably gave rise to this comedy. Beatrice and Benedick are Shakspeare's pure invention. Hero, in Bandello's story, is called Firminia, and there are no prototypes of Dogberry and Verges.

"Much Ado about Nothing" is remarkable among Shakspeare's plays for what the French call the unities. The scene is all in, or very near, Leonato's house, and the events flow naturally one from another. The author in the "Monthly Packet" who writes "Shakspeare Talks with Uncritical People" says of it: "Less profound than the 'Merchant of Venice,' less passionate than 'All 's well that ends Well,' it has a place of its own, bewitching us by the spell of its warm human interest, by the bright life which glows through it, and the flashing fire which enlivens it."

The character of Beatrice has been frequently, I think, misunderstood. She has been condemned as pert and unfeminine; whereas I think, with Lady Martin (Miss Helen Faucit), that she is simply a girl bubbling over with merriment. She is brilliantly quick-witted, and lives among persons of no pretension to intellectual powers. They love her, and admire her sallies much as devoted parents do those of a precocious and somewhat forward child. But Beatrice is a lady, every inch of her. The moment she awakens to a perception that there may possibly be people in the world who take a different view of her "playful lightning of sarcasm and repartee," how immediately she draws back, with gentle dignity, and without affront! Lady Martin says: "She simply rejoices in the keen sword-play of her wit, as she would in any other exercise of her intellect, or sport of her fancy;" and, "up to the time the play opens, her life has been one of pure sunshine. Sorrow or wrong have been unknown to her; there has been no call on the deeper and finer qualities of her nature." But loving the exercise of her gift of brilliant repartee (a gift not honored now-a-days as it was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth), she has found in the little court surrounding her uncle, the Governor, no "foeman worthy of her steel," save the Signior Benedick. In "maiden meditation" how she may make her next attack upon him, and how he will parry it by some equally brilliant trick of fence, her fancy has come to dwell a great deal on Signior Benedick. He is her own property among the courtiers, her natural prey, — a kind of foe who cannot pass her without giving or taking a thrust. She gets impatient when they are within speaking distance if he does not notice her. "The train is laid," says Lady

Martin, "and it only requires a spark to have it burst into flame."

Contrast Beatrice with poor Katharine, in the "Taming of the Shrew." Katharine has lived all her life among people who despised her, — people who rasped her quick temper by their meanness, insincerity, dulness, and want of kindliness. Beatrice has lived a great lady in a charming court, — loved, honored, wooed, petted, caressed, looked up to, trusted, and admired. *Her* people are the perfection of goodness and high-breeding; *she* the spoilt child of the court, and the dearly loved friend of her pretty, gentle, timid little cousin Hero, who in general suffers her to do what she pleases with her. Beatrice has a temper, quick as a flash; but Katharine's, until it meets heroic treatment under Petruchio, has been kept in a perpetual state of irritation, her own fine qualities themselves assisting to exasperate her with the people round her.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

When "Much Ado about Nothing" opens, the Governor and his family are standing in the open square before the Governor's house (Sicily being at that time a dependency of Aragon), and the little court is receiving a messenger.

Don Pedro of Aragon has been warring against foes who were assisted by his illegitimate brother, Don John. The foes have been defeated, and Don John has come back to his allegiance, soured, sullen, and bent on mischief, — partly for mere mischief's sake, and partly for revenge. The man who has most distinguished himself in the war is a young Florentine, who has an uncle settled in Messina, Don Claudio, — a brave but commonplace young man, whose

distinguishing characteristic is his incapacity for entertaining more than one idea at a time. Before he went to the war he had the dawnings of a liking for little Hero, and her father Leonato was not, I think, averse to the match; but the war put her quite out of his head, and there the matter might have dropped, — with perhaps a little hurt feeling upon Hero's part, — but for the events that form the drama.

We will read the first scene, for nowhere does a first scene better bring out the characters that are to make the story. We see Leonato, loyal and courteous, and a little stately. As I said, he is proud of his charming niece, and amused by her gay sallies. Beatrice stands fidgeting till Benedick is brought forward. "Signior Montanto," as she calls him, is a nickname founded on a trick of fence, and carries out the idea of their being perpetually engaged in wordy sword-play. Don Pedro is the courteous prince, not very young, I think, but hardly to be described as middle-aged. Prince-like, he has a fancy for being *deus ex machina*, — the god who runs the machine.

Benedick does not show to advantage in the first scene in which we see him. He forgets himself as a gentleman in his speech to Leonato; but, to do him justice, he is never again guilty of impertinence to the good and stately Governor, who, so far as we can see, does not even perceive his error; but Beatrice does, and it puts a little genuine exasperation into her encounter with her old adversary. Claudio plunges headlong into love with Hero. War paves the way for love. A *gal*lant man, and gal*lantry* are very apt to go together. War being out of his head, Hero comes into it. We are very sure that Benedick says truth when he declares he has personally no liking for little, quiet,

affectionate Hero. She is not the kind of woman to suit his taste, and I, at least, believe that he had (whether he knew it or not) a tall, brilliant, stately lady for his ideal.

The messenger in the first scene was evidently a gentleman-messenger, as Raleigh was when he first attracted the notice of Queen Elizabeth.

Leonato. I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina.

Messenger. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leonato. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Messenger. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leonato. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honor on a young Florentine called Claudio.

Messenger. Much deserved on his part; and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion. He hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

But as the kindly Governor and the messenger continue to talk of Claudio, and of the joy of his old uncle at his success, Beatrice grows impatient and says suddenly: —

I pray you, is Signior Montanto returned from the wars, or no?

Messenger. I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

Leonato. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

Messenger. O, he is returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beatrice. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

Leonato. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he 'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Messenger. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beatrice. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it. He is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

Messenger. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beatrice [*mimicking*]. And a good soldier to a lady. But what is he to a lord?

Messenger. A lord to a lord; a man to a man; stuffed with all honorable virtues.

Beatrice. He is so indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man, — but for the stuffing! Well, we are all mortal.

Leonato. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there is a skirmish of wit between them.

Beatrice. Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one. So that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

Messenger. Is it possible?

Beatrice. Very easily possible; he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

Messenger. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

Beatrice. No, an he were, I would burn my library. . . .

Messenger. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beatrice. Do, good friend.

Leonato. You will never run mad, niece.

Beatrice. No, not till a hot January.

Messenger. Don Pedro is approached.

The messenger, little as we see of him, is very charming, so courteous, so modest, so anxious to uphold the credit of his officers, so simple-hearted, and so slow-witted; under fire from Beatrice he is utterly bewildered and confused. She appreciates his excellences and spares him.

The victorious Prince comes in, attended by his discomfited brother and his chief officers. Courtesies pass between him and the Governor. Benedick, as I have said, breaks a coarse jest on the old man, which Leonato turns aside with courtesy, and then Beatrice bursts upon him.

Beatrice. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody marks you.

Benedick. What! my dear Lady Disdain, are you yet living?

And so they flash back at each other repartee after repartee, till Don Pedro interrupts them by announcing to Benedick the arrangements he has been making with the Governor for their stay at Messina.

Don Pedro, as I said before, loves to exercise his kind-heartedness, and his princely taste for patronage and interference, by running other people's affairs; and finding that Claudio is in love with Leonato's short daughter, not only promises to sound the father and promote the suit, but to court the lady himself in behalf of the real lover. Then he and Claudio both proceed to joke Benedick about his disinclination for the fair sex; and Benedick having departed on an errand for the Prince, Claudio, who did not dare talk sentiment when *he* was present, pours out his love-story to a more sympathizing listener: —

> O, my lord,
> When you went onward to this ended action
> I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
> That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
> Than to drive liking to the name of love;
> But now I am returned, and that war-thoughts
> Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
> Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
> All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
> Saying I liked her ere I went to wars.

Scene 2.

In this scene the Governor's household is in a bustle, arranging for the entertainment of the Prince. Antonio, Leonato's brother, thinks he has overheard the Prince, while walking in a "thick-pleached alley" of the fruit-orchard, tell

Count Claudio that he was in love with Hero, and intended that evening in a dance to ask her hand in marriage. It speaks well for the sound hearts of the two old men that while gratified with the honor done their house, they are not elated. Indeed, Antonio says the news will be good news "only as the event may stamp them. But they have a good cover, and show well outward."

Scene 3.

Here we have Don John, and Conrade, one of his followers; and we are told the reason of Don John's sullen behavior. His position is galling to him in every way. Like many another man, he rather prides himself on his ill-temper, as a proof of his sincerity and independence.

Don John. I cannot hide what I am. I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humor.

Conrade advises prudence. Don John, the rebel, has but lately been taken back into his brother's grace, where, his adviser hints, it is impossible he should take true root but by help of the fair weather he may make for himself.

Don John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in *his* grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth I would bite. If I had my liberty I would do my liking. In the mean time let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

At this moment Borachio coming in tells of an intended marriage.

Don John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

Borachio. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

Don John. Who? — the most exquisite Claudio?

Borachio. Even he.

Don John. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

Borachio. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

Don John. How came you by this?

Borachio. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the Prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference. I whipped me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the Prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

Don John. Come, come, let us thither. This may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow. If I can cross him any way I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

Conrade. To the death, my lord.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

This act opens with all the bustle of preparation, in the hospitable house of Leonato, for the proper entertainment of Don Pedro, the son of his king. There is to be a masked ball, and the family have come together after supper, discussing what has been observed at the feast, — as we all do after a gathering. Beatrice was no doubt the ruling spirit in her uncle's house; and now she has paused in her preparations, flashing about her sparks of brilliancy, "a creature," says a chance critic quoted by Lady Martin, "overflowing with joyousness, — raillery itself being in *her* nothing more than an excess of animal spirits, tempered by passing through a brave and loyal soul." Lady Martin remarks, too, that Shakspeare seems to have taken especial pleasure in the delineation of Beatrice, and more especially in devising

encounters between her and Benedick, — these encounters reminding us of what was once said of Shakspeare himself, in his passages of words with Ben Jonson; where Jonson is likened to a Spanish galleon, Shakspeare to an English frigate, "lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, tacking about, and taking advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention." However, in this scene there is no Benedick, only, as we said before, "the family." Old Leonato — goodness, hospitality, and gentlemanness incarnate, but not quick of wit — delights in his niece's quaint, daring way of looking at things. He is proud of her, too; "for with all her sportive and somewhat domineering ways, she is every inch a noble lady, bearing herself in a manner worthy of her high blood and courtly breeding. He knows how good and sound she is at heart, no less than in head, — one of those strong natures which can be counted on to rise up in answer to a call upon their courage and fertility of resource, in any time of difficulty or trouble. Her shrewd, sharp sayings have only a pleasant piquancy for him. Indeed, however much weak, colorless natures might stand in awe of eyes so quick to detect a flaw, and a wit so prompt to cover it with ridicule, there must have been a charm for him, and for all manly natures, in the very peril of coming under the fire of her raillery. A young, beautiful, graceful woman, flashing out brilliant sayings, — charged with no real malice, but with just enough of a sting in them to pique the self-esteem of those at whom they are aimed, — must always, one would fancy, have a peculiar charm for men of spirit. And so, we see at the outset, it was with Beatrice. Not only her uncle, but also Don Pedro and Count Claudio have the highest admiration for her." We may remark, too, that she never levels

a shaft of wit directly at her uncle. All her behavior to him is most loving and dutiful; to her cousin Hero (who is greatly her inferior) she is unfailingly loyal and tender. Don John may deceive his brother, and Count Claudio, and Leonato, and even Benedick, but he does not impose on this sharp-witted girl, who remarks upon his looks at supper. Hero, always considerate, tries to excuse him. Then Beatrice (whose mind is full of Benedick) begins to say of Don John: "What an excellent man would he be that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick!" and goes on to describe the latter as "always talking, like my lady's [spoilt] eldest son." As she goes on with her quips, Leonato, wholly incapable of answering her back, says, "By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get a husband if so sharp of thy tongue;" and Beatrice, whose head is running on matrimony (Hero's projected marriage being the exciting event of the day), says promptly: "For that blessing I am on my knees morning and evening. Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face;" which is the first intimation we have that Benedick wore one. Antonio, Leonato's brother, a somewhat fussy old gentleman, who took no great delight in plays on words, interrupts Beatrice's jokes about beards and husbands by calling the family as it were "to order," and saying to Hero *à propos* to Don Pedro's supposed intention to court her in the masquerade, "Well, niece, I trust *you* will be ruled by your father." But Beatrice breaks in, willing to plague Uncle Antonio, with, —

> Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make a courtesy, and say: "Father, as it pleases you." But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say: "Father, as it please me."

Leonato. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Beatrice. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered by a piece of valiant dust? — to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I 'll none. Adam's sons are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leonato. Daughter, remember what I told you. If the Prince do solicit you in that kind you know your answer.

Beatrice. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time. If the Prince be too importunate, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. But hear me, Hero; wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding mannerly modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace, faster and faster, till he sink a-pace into his grave.

Leonato. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beatrice. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.

Leonato. The revellers are coming; brother, make a good room.

Beatrice's description of Scotch jig, measure, and cinque-pace applies in modern dancing to reel, minuet, and galopade.

Then the maskers pass before us, and we hear scraps of their conversation. Little Hero, who hardly opens her lips when her cousin is by, but seems all ears for her raillery, plucks up a spirit under her mask, and tries a little coquetry.

The next lady who passes is Margaret, the lady in waiting, attended by two gentlemen, Signior Benedick and the songster Balthazar. Benedick makes haste to shift off Margaret on Balthazar, and escapes to Beatrice.

Then pass Antonio and Ursula, the gay waiting-woman, trying to befool the old man; and next comes Benedick, who has found out Beatrice and paired off with the only lady who interests him. They are in high dispute, and Beatrice

knows whom she is walking with, though he speaks in a feigned voice and thinks she is deceived.

Beatrice. Will you not tell me who told you so?

Benedick. No, you shall pardon me.

Beatrice. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Benedick. Not now.

Beatrice. That I was disdainful! — and that I had my good wit out of The Hundred Merry Tales! Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

Benedick. What 's he?

Beatrice. I am sure you know him well enough.

Benedick. I pray you, what is he?

Beatrice. Why, he 's the Prince's jester, — a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders; none but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit but in his villany. For he both pleases men and angers them; and then they laugh at him, and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded me.

Benedick. When I know the gentleman I will tell him what you say.

Beatrice. Do, do. He 'll but break a comparison or two on me, which, peradventure not marked, or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there 's a partridge-wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Music within.*] We must follow the leaders.

Benedick. In every good thing.

Beatrice. Nay, if they lead to any ill I will leave them at the next turning. [*Dance. Exeunt all.*

In these last words I seem to see Benedick's utter discomfiture. He has to say something, and all he can find to say is irrelevant and commonplace. Who cannot see Beatrice, well satisfied with herself, dancing away lightly and joyously?

As they all pass, dancing, Don John remains with his two confidants, Conrade, a worthless gentleman, and Borachio a ruffian. Don John thinks he has found out that Don Pedro is himself sweet upon Claudio's little love; and as Claudio

comes up, endeavoring to pass himself for Signior Benedick, he points out to him the Prince and Hero, saying that he has overheard him making to her a declaration of love. Claudio, ever ready to go off at half-cock, and with apparently no reasoning powers whatever, falls at once into the trap, and begins to be jealous of the Prince, who by agreement is wooing for him. In truth, the course of Claudio's love would be smooth as a mill-pond, were it not for his own self-deceptions. He looks so sullen (having resolved to give up Hero) that Benedick, who has come back, cannot resist plaguing him. *He* is not the man who would have believed his friend and Prince could have served him thus, but Claudio is as ready to think harm of his friend as afterwards of his love. Not able to bear Benedick's raillery, he soon takes himself away; and then we see how hurt Benedick has been by the words that have fallen from Beatrice. He began it himself, — as children say, — but Beatrice planted her stings best. What could be more hateful to a gallant gentleman, who had plumed himself upon the superiority of his wit, than to be called the Prince's jester? However (unlike Beatrice, who, in corresponding circumstances, at once lays her own errors to heart), he does what Adam's sons have always done, — he blames the woman.

> But that my lady Beatrice should know me and not know me! The Prince's fool! Ha! it may be that I go under that title because I am merry — yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong. I am *not* so reputed! It is the base, the bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person and so gives me out. Well! I'll be revenged as I may.

At this moment comes in Don Pedro, attended by Leonato and his daughter; and Benedick, who is no time-server, ad-

ministers a reproof, in case (which he does not think possible) the Prince has been playing false to Claudio; for Benedick does not understand the situation, not having been present when the courting arrangement was made. We see in the scene that follows how furious Benedick (accused of being the Prince's jester) is with Beatrice. Indeed, perhaps her taunt has made him more quick to assert his independence by the reproof he administers, in Hero's presence, to his master and general. I think Benedick is older than Don Pedro. My ideas of their ages are: Benedick, thirty-five; Don Pedro, thirty; Claudio, twenty-two.

The Prince has come in search of Claudio, eager to tell him of the success of his wooing, and cries out to Benedick:

Now, Signior, where 's the count? Did you see him?

Benedick. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your grace had got the good-will of the young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

Don Pedro. To be whipped! What 's his fault?

Benedick. The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

Don Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Benedick. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

Don Pedro. I will but teach them to sing and restore them to the owner.

Benedick. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

Don Pedro. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel with you. The gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

Benedick. O! she misused me past the endurance of a block! An oak with but one green leaf upon it would have answered her. My very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me (not thinking I had been myself) that I was the Prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw, — huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poinards, and every word stabs. If her breath were as unsupportable as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect the north star. I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had lent him before he transgressed. She would have made Hercules have turned spit; yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; — you shall find her the infernal Atè in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her; for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon purpose because they would go thither. So, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

Remark in Benedick's speech the description of utter loneliness, — "as melancholy as a lodge in a warren." A warren is waste land devoted to wild rabbits. Of course, it has to be a solitude, that the rabbits may not be disturbed, and with no trees about it, that the warrener may see all that is going on. I have not seen a warren since I was ten years old, but the word brings to my mind recollections of my childhood, — a scene of utter solitude and desolation.

Remark also that Beatrice had not told the Prince that she had danced with Benedick, but he, in his excitement, at once blurts out the secret. With exaggerated horror Benedick, sore from his wounds, declines to meet his adversary.

Some editions of this play make Hero and her father enter in attendance on Don Pedro; it seems far more probable that the family party, Leonato with his niece and daughter, came in at this moment with Claudio, who had been informed that the Prince was looking for him.

As Beatrice enters, Don Pedro whispers to Benedick, —

Look, here she comes.

Benedick. Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the lightest service now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on. I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pygmies, — rather than hold three words conference with this Harpy. You have no employment for me?

Don Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Benedick. O! Lord, sir, here 's a dish I love not. I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. [*Exit Benedick.*

Then Don Pedro, turning to Beatrice, reproaches her for losing the good opinion of Benedick. She answers him with merry quips, but is too bright for him; he cannot cap her, and so turns to Claudio.

Beatrice, taking pity on her cousin's lover, explains that he is jealous, "civil as a Seville orange." These oranges are sour, and are esteemed in England for preserves and marmalade. All the scene that succeeds is very pretty. Quiet Hero's fulness of contentment, Beatrice's little interferences, her natural disappointment that when those younger and less popular than herself are being married she should have no wooer, and the dignity with which she pulls herself up, conscious of having gone a little too far with Don Pedro, and answers his half-joking offer of himself as her bridegroom (which a coquette might easily have converted into a real proposal) with dignity, a compliment, and an apology, — may be noted. Note also the pretty way in which when reminded of her household duties by her uncle, she asks his pardon, courtesies to the Prince, and departs

Don Pedro. Why, how now, Count? Wherefore are you sad?

Claudio. Not sad, my lord.

Don Pedro. How, then, — sick?

Claudio. Neither, my lord.

Beatrice. The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well, but civil, Count, — civil as an orange, and something of the jealous complexion of one.

Don Pedro. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though I 'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won. I have broke with her father, and his good-will is obtained. Name the day of marriage, and God give you joy.

Leonato. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes. His Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it.

Beatrice. Speak, Count, it is your cue.

Claudio. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I were but little happy if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine I am yours. I give away myself for you, and dote in the exchange.

Beatrice. Speak, cousin, or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak neither.

Don Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beatrice. Yea, my lord, I thank it, poor fool; it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claudio. And so she doth, cousin.

Beatrice. Heigho, for alliance! Thus goes every one in the world but I, and I am sun-burned; I may sit in a corner and sing heigh-ho for a husband.

Don Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Beatrice. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days. Your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your Grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

Don Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for out of question you were born in a merry hour.

Beatrice. No, sure, my lord; but there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy.

Leonato. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beatrice. I cry your mercy, uncle. By your Grace's pardon.

[*Exit Beatrice.*

After Beatrice has left them Don Pedro again plays *deus ex machina*, and plans to unite Beatrice and Benedick, of whom he says, he is brave, well-born, and reliable.

Scene 2.

In this scene Don John and Borachio plan their wicked plot against Claudio and Hero, in contrast with the playful plot for good that the Prince and his confederates are planning by which to unite Benedick and Beatrice. The one plot in the end defeats the other. Don John, like most men in his unfortunate social position, is sensitive, envious, and suspicious; Borachio, the bravo of those times, loves money, and is cunning in evil. He is faithful to his employer, but only so long as that employer seems faithful to him. He is of the stuff out of which was made the *landsknecht*, the *condottiere*, the soldier of fortune.

Scene 3.

This scene in Leonato's garden contains Benedick's soliloquy about Claudio in love, and we see, in spite of all he says against matrimony, that he has his own marriage in his mind. *His* wife must be rich, wise, virtuous, fair, mild, noble, witty, and musical; all these things he afterward confesses he has found combined in Beatrice. Seeing Claudio approach, whose bantering, or sentimentality, he feels himself unable to stand, he takes himself away into an arbor. Here is his soliloquy: —

I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love, will, after he has laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love. And such a man is Claudio. I have known

when there was no music in him but the drum and fife, and now he had rather hear the tabor and pipe. I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armor, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier, and now is he turned orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May *I* be so converted, and see with *these* eyes? I cannot tell. I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster, but, I 'll take mine oath on 't till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, — yet I am well; another is wise, — yet I am well; another virtuous, — yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be — that 's certain; wise, or I 'll none; virtuous, or I 'll never cheapen her; fair, or I 'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse; an excellent musician; and her hair shall be of what color Heaven pleases. Ha! — the Prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbor!

Then come in the Prince and Claudio, both aware that Benedick is within ear-shot; and Balthazar, with his lute, sings in the warm summer-night a song quoted among us from generation to generation: —

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot on sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo' —
Or dumps so dull and heavy;
The frauds of men were ever so,
Since summer first was leafy.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

Balthazar puts on all the coynesses which especially distinguish singers, and Benedick, who has great musical taste, growls at his performance, unheard, from his arbor. Then begins the famous scene in which Benedick is made to believe that Beatrice is dying of love for him. Claudio stands where he can watch Benedick, and reports in asides how he takes what is being said of him. The other two, Leonato and the Prince, cannot see their victim. They keep up the conversation with admirable gravity. Benedick, hardly believing his ears at first, is convinced by feeling sure Leonato could not possibly be tricking him; he did not reflect that, as Balzac says, what a man will not do for himself, he will often do for his superior.

Here is the whole scene, with Benedick's soliloquy, and his remarks when Beatrice, quite cross at being sent to call him to supper, delivers her message: —

Don Pedro. Come hither, Leonato; what was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

Claudio [*in a whisper*]. O! ay — stalk on; stalk on; the fowl sets. [*Aloud, speaking to Don Pedro.*] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leonato. No, nor I either; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behavior seemed ever to abhor.

Benedick [*aside*]. Is 't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leonato. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged affection, — it is past the infinite of thought.

Don Pedro. Maybe she doth but counterfeit.

Claudio. Faith! like enough.

Leonato. O heavens! counterfeit! There never was a counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she discovers it.

Don Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claudio [*whispers aside*]. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

Leonato. What effects, my lord? She will sit you,—you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claudio. She did indeed.

Don Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me! I would have thought her spirit would have been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leonato. I would have sworn it had, my lord, especially against Signior Benedick.

Benedick [*aside*]. I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it. Knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

Claudio [*whispering aside*]. He hath taken the infection; hold it up.

Don Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leonato. No, and swears she never will. That is her torment.

Claudio. 'T is true, indeed; so your daughter says. "Shall I," says she, "that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?"

Leonato. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she 'll be up twenty times a night. And there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper full. My daughter tells us that.

Claudio. After that?

Leonato. O, she tore the letter into a thousand ha'pences,—railed at herself that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her. "I measure him," says she, "by my own spirit; I should flout him if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should."

Claudio. Then down on her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her breast, tears her hair, prays, curses: "O sweet Benedick! God give me patience."

Leonato. She doth, indeed; my daughter says so. And the ecstasy has so much overborne her that my daughter is afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself. It is very true.

Don Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claudio. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

Don Pedro. An he should, it were an alms-deed to hang him. She is an excellent, sweet lady; and out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

Claudio. And she is exceeding wise.
Don Pedro. In everything but in loving Benedick.

Then Don Pedro — with the remark that he wishes she had bestowed this dotage upon him; he would have doffed all other respects, and made her half himself — proposes to tell Benedick.

The others assure him this will never do, and Don Pedro, upon second thoughts, remarks, "'T is very possible he'd scorn her love; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptuous spirit."

Claudio. He is a very [proper] handsome man.
Don Pedro. He hath indeed a good outward happiness.
Claudio. 'Fore Heaven and in my mind, he's very wise.
Don Pedro. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.
Leonato. And I take him to be valiant.
Don Pedro. As Hector, I assure you; . . . and the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some of the large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?
Claudio. Never tell him, my lord. Let her wear it out with good counsel.
Don Pedro. Well, let it cool awhile. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, and see how much he is unworthy of so good a lady.
Leonato. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready. [*Exeunt.*
Benedick [*advancing from the arbor*]. This can be no trick; the conference was gravely borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured. They say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her. They say too she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud. Happy are they that can hear their detractions and put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 't is a truth, — I can bear them witness; and virtuous, — 't is so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me; by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her.

I may chance to have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? Shall quips and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humor? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she 's a fair lady. I do spy some marks of love in her.

Beatrice. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Benedick. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beatrice. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me. If it had been painful I would not have come.

Benedick. You take pleasure, then, in the message?

Beatrice. Yea, just as much as you may take on a knife's point and not choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*

Benedick. Ha! "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner;" there 's a double meaning in that. "I took no more pains for your thanks than you took pains to thank me;" that 's as much as to say: Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her I am a villain. If I do not love her I am a Jew. I will go get her picture.

Shakspeare's wonderful art shows itself conspicuously in this scene. Any other writer would have seized the occasion to draw a poetic picture of a desponding, love-sick maiden, as true to life as his experience enabled him to portray. Shakspeare does no such thing. These three men — the Prince, Claudio, and Leonato set about the task they have assigned themselves so unskilfully that any *woman* hidden in the arbor would have known at once that, as children say, "they were making it up as they went along."

Would any Hero have betrayed her cousin to her few-hours-old lover, as sitting in her smock at dead of night writing a questionably-modest love-letter? Would Beatrice, unless transported out of her own character, have invoked any Benedick as she is reputed to have done? Would she to any

bedfellow, or cousin, have said anything so stilted and unnatural as "I measure him by my own spirit; for I should flout him if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should"?

Not, surely, this Beatrice, nor scarcely any woman. Beatrice would have hidden her wound proudly, have broken jest upon jest upon Benedick to the last, and have died self-martyred with the spirit of a Spartan. But these men know none of these things, and clumsily set to work to the best of their shallow perception to evolve from their inner consciousness a proud girl in her love-trouble. They were not poets, nor dramatists, nor novelists, — nor was Benedick; else, from internal evidence, he would have detected the deception, and convicted them out of their own mouths of *lèze*-chivalry.

However, they knew no better, nor did he. Ursula and Hero manage their task in a very different fashion. They draw no picture of Benedick in a supposed maudlin state. What a man would do or say, in solitude or among his friends, under such circumstances, was unknown to them, and they let the subject very sensibly alone.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

The charm of this scene is that while it repeats the action in the closing part of the last act, we here see women practising upon a woman. Hero, too shy to speak in company or before strange men, now displays wit, sense, and penetration, so that we better understand than we have done before, her close intimacy with the brilliant Beatrice. The "pleached" bower is a bower interlaced and intertwined with creepers.

Hero. The pleachèd bower,
Where honey-suckles, ripened by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter, — like favorites
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against the power that bred it. . . .
Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin;
For look where Beatrice, like a lap-wing, runs
Close to the ground to hear our conference.

Ursula. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait.
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is crouchèd in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it. —
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.

Ursula. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero. So says the Prince, and my new 'trothèd lord.

Ursula. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Ursula. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bride?

Hero. O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man.
But nature never framed a woman's heart

Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice.
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Mispraising what they look on ; and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love
Nor take no shape nor project of affection.
She is so self-endeared.

Ursula. Sure, I think so.
And therefore, certainly, it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward. If fair-faced,
She 'd swear the gentleman should be her sister.
If black, why, nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot ; if tall, a lance well headed ;
If low, an agate very vilely cut ;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds ;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Ursula. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable

Hero. No, not to be so odd, and from all fashion,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable.
But who dare tell her so ? If I should speak
She 'd mock me into air. O ! she would laugh me
Out of myself ; press me to death with wit ;
Thenceforth let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly ;
It were a better death than die with mocks ;
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Ursula. Yet tell her of it ; hear what she will say.

Hero. No. Rather will I go to Benedick
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And truly I 'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with. One doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

Ursula. O ! do not do your cousin such a wrong ;
She cannot be so much without true judgment

(Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prized to have) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.
Hero. He is the only man of Italy, —
Always excepted my dear Claudio.
Ursula. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy. Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valor,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.
Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.
[*Exeunt Hero and Ursula.*
Beatrice [*advancing*]. What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives but in the lack of such.
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee, —
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

Contrast the Beatrice who says this with the imaginary Beatrice Claudio and the Prince drew for her. There is but one point in the conversation between Hero and Ursula which might have led quick-witted Beatrice to suspect collusion. Had the conversation been genuine we may be sure that Hero never would have allowed Ursula's speech in which she sets Benedick above the "dear Claudio," to pass without rebuke.

Scene 2.

This scene takes place in Leonato's house. The Prince is in one of the reception-rooms, with Benedick, Claudio, and Leonato for his attendants. Benedick insists he has the tooth-ache, and Claudio and Leonato gibe him, because they will have it that he is in love. We find out he has

shaved off the objectionable beard, and that he looks younger. But he has hardly a word at command with which to parry or return the jokes aimed at him. When Benedick and Leonato retire together to talk of Beatrice, Don John enters and proclaims to the Prince and Claudio that Hero is a worthless woman. He tells them that a man will talk with her that night at her chamber-window. Claudio never pauses to weigh evidence, — to put what he knows of Hero into the balance, and poise it against such charges. He not only believes at once (the coward!) but proposes the most cruel and dishonoring revenge. Nothing will ever reconcile me to Count Claudio. I give my assent to his marrying Hero in the end merely and solely because she wishes it, just as I give my consent to Will Ladislaw marrying Dorothea Casaubon; but I never shall be pleased at either match, even if they turned out pretty well (as they very possibly did in both cases). Dorothea may have fitted her elastic ideal upon Will, as she had already fitted it to Casaubon; and Hero was so quiet and gentle that I daresay she never found out the deficiencies of her husband, provided he was tolerably kind to her.

Scene 3.

This scene is in a street, where we encounter the immortal Dogberry and Verges. Dogberry, I think, is a bluff constable, about fifty, a well-to-do tradesman of his town (which was never the Sicilian city of Messina, but Stratford-upon-Avon, or some place in its vicinity). Shakspeare greatly disliked beadles and constables, the petty tyrants of a parish; and indeed, their rule must have been dreadful, especially as applied to tramps and vagrants in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Verges is a superannuated, toothless old man falling into dotage.

Dogberry [*to the watch with their bills and a lantern*]. Are you good men, and true?

Verges. Yea, or else it were a pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dogberry. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's watch.

Verges. Well, give them their charge, neighbor Dogberry.

Dogberry. First, who think you the most desartless man to be a constable?

1 *Watchman.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can read and write.

Dogberry. Come hither, neighbor Seacoal. God hath blessed you with a good name. To be a well-favored man is a gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature.

2 *Watchman.* Both which, master Constable —

Dogberry. — You have. I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favor, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand in the Prince's name.

2 *Watchman.* How if he will not stand?

Dogberry. Why, then take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call all the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verges. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects.

Dogberry. True; and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

2 *Watchman.* We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogberry. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend; only have a care

that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

2 *Watchman.* How if they will not?

Dogberry. Why, then let them alone till they are sober. If they make you not then the better answer you may say they are not the men you took them for. If you meet a thief you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and for such kind of men the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 *Watchman.* If we know him to be a thief shall we not lay hands on him?

Dogberry. Truly, by your office you may, but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Verges. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

. . . . . .

2 *Watchman.* Well, masters, we hear our charge. Let us go, sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Dogberry. One word more, honest neighbors. I pray you watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu; be vigilant, I beseech you.

Then, as these guardians of the night seek the bench in the church-porch, Conrade and Borachio come upon the scene; the latter is a little drunk, and much elated by the stroke of business he has done that night. As they stand and talk under shelter, out of the rain, the watch, within earshot, learns that Borachio is to receive of Don John a thousand ducats for talking to Margaret the waiting-woman at Lady Hero's window, while the Prince, Claudio, and Don John are watching from the orchard. They also hear some *badinage* about fashion, Borachio saying, "Seest thou not what a deformed thief this Fashion is?" The word "thief" catches George Seacoal's ear. He instantly concludes that Deformed is their accomplice, and when they are arrested they are required to produce Deformed.

Scene 4.

It is the wedding-morning. We are again in Leonato's house. Hero and her waiting-women are holding counsel over the wedding-finery, when in comes Beatrice, very *distraite* and nervous, and runs the gantlet of the jokes of the waiting-maids. Benedick had protested he had tooth-ache; she declares that she has caught a cold.

Scene 5.

The wedding-hour has arrived, the wedding-party has assembled, when the Governor is called out to see two malefactors, whom the watch have apprehended. Had he examined them there would have been no further story; but Dogberry and Verges, who have brought the prisoners for commitment, are so long in bringing their accusation to a comprehensible point that the Governor cuts the matter short by saying that he delegates his power to examine and commit to Dogberry, and that they had better deal themselves with the evil-doers. Observe throughout this scene the true, noble, kindly gentleman in Leonato, giving honor even to his inferiors, and never showing his impatience, though he tries to make them get their business done! Imagine, too, the swelling importance of Dogberry upon the bench, backed up by his familiar, Verges.

Leonato. What would you with me, honest neighbors?

Dogberry. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly.

Leonato. Brief, I pray you; for you see, 't is a busy time with me.

Dogberry. Marry, that it is, sir.

Verges. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Dogberry. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter, — an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

Verges. Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man and no honester than I.

Dogberry. Comparisons are odorous; *palabras*, neighbor Verges.

Leonato. Neighbors, you are tedious.

Dogberry. It pleases your worship to say so; but we are the poor Duke's officers. But truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leonato. All thy tediousness on me? Ha!

Dogberry. Yea, and 't were a thousand times more than 't is; for I hear as good exclamation of your worship as of any man in the city. And though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it. . . .

Leonato. Take the examination yourself, and bring it me. I am now in great haste, as may appear to you. Drink some wine ere you go; farewell.

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

You will, I am sure, remark that Shakspeare, in that age of speaking evil of the clergy, never mentions them but with respect. Friar Francis, who is to marry Hero and Claudio, is a noble old man.

In the most brutal manner, at the moment when Claudio should say, "I will," in the marriage ceremony, he flings his bride from him. He spares her nothing. *He* is not minded to put the hapless girl to whom he is affianced "away privily." And Don Pedro, exasperated by the slight put upon his princely good offices, forgets all that is due to the honorable and hospitable Leonato, and is nearly as bad as Claudio.

Hero is astonished. She is naturally a woman of few words. Now she cannot speak. Even Beatrice is struck dumb, till her cousin faints and falls, when she springs to her assistance. Old Leonato, too, not only wavers, but, overwhelmed by this attack upon his honor, deems his Hero guilty.

When Don Pedro, Don John, and Claudio leave the

church, Benedick remains. He is not the man to desert the woman he loves, and the woman that she loves, in extremity. He draws near Beatrice, and speaks tenderly and respectfully of Hero.

Benedick. How doth the lady?

Beatrice. Dead, I think. Help, uncle! Hero! Why, Hero? Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!

Leonato. O Fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wished for.

Beatrice. How now, cousin Hero?

Friar. Have comfort, lady.

Leonato. Dost thou look up?

Friar. Yea; wherefore should she not?

Leonato. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes;
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Myself would, on the hazard of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Grieved I I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frown?
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why wast thou ever lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not, with charitable hand,
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates? —
Who smirchèd thus, and mired with infamy,
I might have said, No part of it is mine.
But mine I loved, and mine I praised,
And mine that I was proud on! — O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again.

Benedick. Sir, sir, be patient!
For my part I am so attired in wonder
I know not what to say.

Beatrice. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Benedick. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beatrice. No, truly not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

Leonato. Confirmed! confirmed! . . .
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie? —
Who loved her so that, speaking of her foulness,
Washed it with tears? Hence from her; let her die.

Here the Friar interposes. He bids them remark every sign of innocence in her sweet face, and pledges his age, his calling, and his experience, "that the sweet lady doth lie guiltless there under some blighting error."

"She does not deny her guilt!" cries Leonato.

"Lady," says the Friar, "what man is he you are accused of?"

Hero. They know that do accuse me. O my father,
Prove you that with me any man conversed
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintained the change of words with any creature, —
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.
Friar. There is some strange misprision in the princes.
Benedick. Two of them have the very bent of honor,
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the Bastard,
Whose spirits toil in fraud and villanies.

Then in measured words the Friar, with soft persuasion, endeavors to induce Leonato to give out that his child is dead, slain by the shock of so terrible an accusation. Thus she will win the pity of the public, and even that of those who had accused her. Meantime her friends must ferret out evidence on which she may be cleared from foul suspicion.

Benedick. Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you,
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

And when the Friar has drawn away poor Hero and her father, Beatrice and Benedick remain alone for their first scene of courting: —

Benedick. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beatrice. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Benedick. I will not desire that.

Beatrice. You have no reason; I do it freely.

Benedick. Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

Beatrice. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her.

Benedick. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beatrice. A very even way, but no such friend.

Benedick. May a man do it?

Beatrice. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Benedick. I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange?

Beatrice. As strange as the thing I know not. . . . It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you. But believe me not. And yet I lie not. I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

Benedick. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me!

Beatrice. Do not swear by it and eat it.

Benedick. I will swear by it — that you love me, and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

Beatrice. Will you not eat your word?

Benedick. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.

Beatrice. Why then, God forgive me!

Benedick. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Beatrice. You have stayed me in a happy hour; I was about to protest I loved you.

Benedick. And do it with all thy heart.

Beatrice. I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest.

Benedick. Come, bid me do anything for thee.

Beatrice. Kill Claudio!

This sudden proposition startles Benedick, who is hardly prepared to renounce the friend he loves, and to become

his slayer. But Beatrice pours out her very just opinion of Count Claudio.

Is he not approved in the height a villain that hath slandered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? Oh that I were a man! What! bear her in hand till they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancor, — O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place!

In vain Benedick tries to get in a few words. Accusations of Claudio, frantic wishes that Heaven had made *her* a man rush from the lips of Beatrice. At last she stops for want of breath, and bursts into a flood of tears.

Benedick. Tarry, good Beatrice; by this hand, I love thee.

Beatrice. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Benedick. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

Beatrice. Yea; as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

Benedick. Enough; I am engaged; I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin. I must say she is dead. And so farewell.

Scene 2.

Then ensues the examination of Conrade and Borachio in their prison. Dogberry, swollen with importance, is in the seat of justice. The sexton, who really knows something of the formalities proper on such an occasion, tries to keep up appearances, and confusion worse confounded is the result. Observe that when Conrade replies to Dogberry's "Sirrah" by the words, "I am a gentleman," he inspires a certain respect which saves him from further brow-beating until they come to bind him. Then Dogberry utters the words which have made him immortal. If we compare this scene with Bunyan's account of his own examination by country jus-

tices, about sixty years later, as recorded in the examination of Christian and Faithful in Vanity Fair we shall see no cause to set aside Verges' opinion of his neighbor Dogberry, that he had "been ever considered a merciful man."

Dogberry. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Verges. O! a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

Dogberry. Marry that am I, and my partner.

Verges. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

Sexton. But which are the offenders to be examined? Let them come before master Constable.

Dogberry. Yea, marry; let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

Borachio. Borachio.

Dogberry. Pray write down, Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

Conrade. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dogberry. Write down, master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

Conrade and Borachio. Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogberry. Write down that they hope they serve God. And write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains. Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Conrade. Marry, sir, I say we are none.

Dogberry. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Borachio. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dogberry. Well, stand aside. 'Fore God they are both in a tale. Have you writ down that they are none?

Sexton. Master Constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogberry. Yea, marry; that is the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you in the Prince's name, accuse these men.

1 *Watchman.* This man said, sir, that Don John, the Prince's brother, was a villain.

Dogberry. Write down, Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother a villain!

Borachio. Master Constable —

Dogberry. Pray thee, fellow, peace. I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

1 *Watchman.* Marry that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogberry. Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

Verges. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

Sexton. What else, fellow?

1 *Watchman.* And that Count Claudio did mean upon his words to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dogberry. O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this!

Sexton. What else?

2 *Watchman.* This is all.

Sexton. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master Constable, let these men be bound and brought to Leonato's; I will go before and show him their examination.

Dogberry. Come, let them be opinioned.

Sexton. Let them be bound.

Conrade. Hands off, coxcomb!

Dogberry. God 's my life! where 's the sexton? Let him write down the Prince's officer, coxcomb! Come, bind them. — Thou naughty varlet!

Conrade. Away! you are an ass! you are an ass!

Dogberry. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? Oh that he were here to write me down an ass! But masters, remember that I am an ass! though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and which is more, an officer; and which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns and everything handsome about him! Bring him away. Oh that I had been writ down an ass!

Act V. *Scene* 1.

The opening of this first scene is between poor Leonato and his brother Antonio. The old father has recovered himself, and believes now that his daughter has been belied. It is very affecting when, on the entrance of Don Pedro and Count Claudio, the two old men challenge the redoubtable young soldier, — old Antonio (the younger) thrusting himself forward in his brother's quarrel, choked for want of words, calling Claudio, over and over again, Boy, boy, boy, as a term of reproach, while Leonato tries to pacify him. It makes one furious with Claudio and the Prince to hear, when Benedick comes in after the old men have gone away, how they talk about them.

Don Pedro. Welcome, signior. You are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claudio. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off by two old men without teeth.

Don Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

Benedick. In a false quarrel there is no true valor. I came to seek you both.

Claudio. We have been up and down to seek thee, for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

Benedick. It is in my scabbard. Shall I draw it?

Don Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claudio. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels. Draw to pleasure us.

Don Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

Claudio. What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast metal enough in thee to kill care.

Benedick. Sir, I meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you, choose another subject.

Benedick is admirable in this scene. He strives to keep himself under control. He wants to avoid challenging Claudio in the presence of the Prince. He draws him aside and whispers his challenge. Don Pedro thinks he is giving an invitation to supper, and wants it to include himself. He goes on jesting about Beatrice. The dignity with which Benedick ignores these remarks, and takes leave of the Prince, raises him still higher in our estimation. As to the Prince and Claudio, they sink every moment. One wonders they could name "the old man's daughter;" one wonders that the tragic scenes through which they had just passed had not put the merry plot they had engaged in out of their heads.

Benedick [*to Claudio*]. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claudio. God bless me from a challenge!

Benedick. You are a villain — I jest not. I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

Claudio. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

Don Pedro. What, a feast, — a feast?

Claudio. I' faith, I thank him. He hath bid me to a calf's-head and capers; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife 's naught.

Benedick. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

Don Pedro. I 'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said thou hadst a fine wit; True, says she, a fine little one. No, said I, a great wit; Right, says she, a great gross one. Nay, faith, said I, a good wit; Just so, says she, it hurts nobody. Nay, said I, the gentleman is wise; Certain, says she, a wise gentleman. Nay, said I, he hath the tongues; That I believe, said she, for he swore a thing to me on Monday night which he forswore on Tuesday morning. There 's a double tongue! There 's two tongues! Thus did she an hour together trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh thou wast the properest man in Italy.

Claudio. For the which she wept heartily, and said she cared not.

Don Pedro. Yes, that she did. But yet for all that, an if she did not hate him dearly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all.

Claudio. All, all. . . .

Benedick. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humor. You break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you; I must discontinue your company. Your brother, Don John, is fled from Messina; you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet; and till then peace be with him.

At this point the watch bring the prisoners before the Prince. You will observe that, Don John having run away, and not having paid Borachio the reward of his villany, the rascal, dreading torture, and finding himself in a strait, makes a merit of confession. Some touch of remorse may have visited him, too; for it is a sign of grace in him that he upholds the innocence of Margaret.

Don Pedro. How now, two of my brother's men bound? Borachio one! Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dogberry. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

Don Pedro. Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? This learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What is your offence?

"Sweet Prince," cries Borachio, and then pours forth his confession, overwhelming with shame and pity Don Pedro and Claudio. Their self-accusations are broken in upon by Dogberry, who insists that when time and place shall serve it must be remembered that he is an ass.

Then Leonato and his brother enter, with the sexton. By him they have been told the truth. Leonato demands which of the men before him is the slanderer.

Borachio. Even I, alone.
Leonato. No, not so, villain. Thou beliest thyself.
Here stand a pair of honorable men, —
A third has fled that had a hand in it;
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death.
Record it with your high and noble deeds;
'T was bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

The Prince and Claudio hang their heads at this reproof, and (the least they can do under the circumstances) offer to submit to anything the old man may demand by way of expiation.

Leonato requires of Claudio to make public statement of the innocence of Hero, and then to marry his heiress, his brother's daughter, who strangely resembles her cousin. Borachio, he says, shall be confronted with the wicked Margaret, "who, I believe," he adds, "was packed in all this wrong."

Borachio. No, by my soul, she was not;
Nor knew she what she did when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous
In anything that I do know of her.

Dogberry. Moreover, sir (which indeed is not under black and white), this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me *ass*. I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed. . . . Pray you, examine him upon that point.

Leonato. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dogberry. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leonato. There 's for thy pains.

Dogberry. God save the foundation.

Leonato. Go. I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dogberry. I leave an errant knave with your worship, which I beseech your worship to correct yourself for the example of others. God keep your worship; I wish your worship well. God restore you to health. I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it. Come, neighbor.

Scene 2.

This scene is between Margaret, — quite unabashed, and possibly unsuspicious of what is thought of her behavior, — and Benedick; the chief point of which is Benedick's total incapacity for poetry, — in those days an essential part of love-making.

Then enters Beatrice, who is seeking Benedick to learn if he has challenged Claudio. The interview ends in a little of their peculiar form of courtship, of which Benedick says truly, "Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably."

As they are talking, Ursula bursts in upon them with the news, "It is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused; the Prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone."

Scene 3.

This scene is in a church, whither Claudio has repaired, attended by Don Pedro and his court, to hang garlands upon Hero's tomb, while musicians play a solemn dirge. Claudio also affixes to the monument a poem in vindication of the memory of Hero, and vows yearly to perform similar rites.

Done to death by slanderous tongues,
Was the Hero that here lies;
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame that never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Scene 4.

Is in a room in Leonato's house. All are waiting for the marriage ceremony. Hero is standing beside her father.

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?
Leonato. So are the Prince and Claudio who accused her,
Upon the error that you heard debated;
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.
Antonio. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.
Benedick. And so am I, being else by faith enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
Leonato. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves.
And when I send for you come hither masked.
The Prince and Claudio promised by this hour
To visit me. You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

Then Benedick entreats the Friar's good offices for his own marriage, and looking serious, as a member of Leonato's family might well look, he is twitted by the Prince and Claudio, who have no seemly seriousness in them. I think we see in them how a habit of perpetual joking, and mocking, and scoffing deteriorates the character. Benedick and Beatrice have been cured of it just in time. Claudio says (for the bride and bridesmaids come in masked), "Which is the lady I must seize upon?" And then, "Sweet, let me see your face."

Leonato. No, that you shall not till you take her hand
Before this Friar, and swear to marry her.
Claudio. Give me your hand before this holy Friar;
I am your husband if you like of me.
Hero [*unmasking*]. And while I lived I was your other wife.

Great is the amazement of the Prince, but in Claudio, to do him justice, happiness overpowers wonder. Benedick, stepping up to the bridesmaids, asks which is Beatrice?

Beatrice. I answer to that name [*unmasking*]. What is your will?

Benedick. Do not you love me?

Beatrice. No, no more than reason.

Benedick. Why, then your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio
Have been deceived, for they all swore you did.

Beatrice. Do not you love me?

Benedick. No, no more than reason.

Beatrice. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula
Are much deceived, for they did swear you did.

Benedick. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beatrice. They swore that you were almost dead for me.

Benedick. It is no such matter. Then you do not love me?

Beatrice. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leonato. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claudio. And I 'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her;
For here 's a paper written in his hand, —
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero. And here 's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Benedick. A miracle! Here 's our own hands against our hearts! Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beatrice. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life; for I was told you were in a consumption.

Benedick. Peace! I will stop your mouth. [*Kisses her.*

Don Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick the married man?

Benedick. I 'll tell you what, Prince, a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humor. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Lady Martin says of this last scene: "In the encounter of wits Beatrice, as usual, has the best of it, but Benedick is too happy to care for such defeat. He knows that he has

won her heart, and that it is a heart of gold. He can therefore well afford to smile at the epigrams of a college of wit-crackers, and at the quotations against himself of his former smart sayings about lovers and married men. His home, I doubt not, would be a happy one, — all the happier because Beatrice and he have each a strong individuality, with fine spirits, and busy brains. They will always be finding out something new and interesting in each other's characters. As for Beatrice, at least, one feels sure that Benedick will have a great deal to discover and to admire in her, the more he knows her." And she adds, remembering her own triumphs as an actress: "I can only hope that in impersonating her I have given one half the pleasure to my audience that I have had in taking upon me her nature for a time. Such representations were to me a pure holiday. However tired I might be when the play began, the pervading joyousness of her character soon took hold of me, and led me delightedly on."

AS YOU LIKE IT.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

THIS play is a pastoral, a tale of Arcady; and Arcady with Shakspeare is the life of the greenwood, the life led by Robin Hood and his men, — a life discontinued since their days in the uncertain climate of England, but revived among ourselves in the tent-life and camp-life often led during the summer months in the forests or on the mountains. The whole play is in the open air, and in the sunshine, and the sunniest thing throughout it all is Rosalind. The course of true love runs smoothly throughout, hardly rippled except in the case of the weak Silvius and his Phœbe.

The story is taken from a pastoral romance by one Lodge, entitled "Rosalynde," which was founded largely on a story in Chaucer. Why Shakspeare called it "As You Like It," it is difficult to say. It has, so far as I can see, no particular moral. One commentator says it was designed to contrast rural with court life; another, that it preaches the virtues of patience and contentment. These morals I think are merely incidental, and not part of the design. Jaques, Touchstone, Audrey, and William are entirely the work of Shakspeare. The original novel was affected, sentimental, and tedious, but it contained the germs of the other characters.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

The first scene is not in the greenwood, but in an orchard, under blossoming boughs, in the bright days of early summer. The speakers are the good old servant Adam (a character that Gilbert Shakspeare, who lived to a great age, remembered to have seen acted by his brother William), and Orlando, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Bois.

Orlando is perhaps Shakspeare's most perfect *héros de roman*. He is handsome, stalwart, modest, proud, persecuted, beloved, generous, and chivalrous, — a most ideal lover. His father, Sir Rowland, dying, had left his estates to Oliver, his first-born, but had charged him to bring up his two brothers with "all good breeding." One brother, Jaques, he sent to school, where he "did goldenly;" but Orlando, the younger, he kept at home, permitting him only to associate with rustics, and to pick up such knowledge as might fall in his way. "As far as in him lies," says the poor youth, "my brother mines my gentility with my education."

Oliver entering the orchard, the brothers come to words with one another. I confess I do not understand Oliver. To me he seems a mean, disloyal villain; but Shakspeare could not have mated his sweet Celia to a man of corrupt heart. However, in this first scene he is clearly detestable. Note that when Oliver contemptuously calls his brother, "Boy!" he seizes him at the same moment, to throw him down. Orlando, though the younger, knows his superior strength, and will do no more than free himself from his brother's grasp, and then hold him at arms' length till he has listened to what he has to say to him.

Adam. Yonder comes my master, your brother.

Orlando. Go apart, Adam, and thou shalt hear how he will shake me up.

Oliver. Now, sir! what make you here!

Orlando. Nothing: I am not taught to make anything.

Oliver. What mar you then, sir?

Orlando. Marry, sir, I am helping you to mar that which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours, with idleness.

Oliver. Marry, sir, be better employed, and be naught a while.

Orlando. Shall I keep your hogs, and eat husks with them? What prodigal portion have I spent, that I should come to such penury?

Oliver. Know you where you are, sir?

Orlando. O, sir, very well: here in your orchard.

Oliver. Know you before whom, sir?

Orlando. Ay, better than he I am before knows me. I know you are my eldest brother, and, in the gentle condition of blood, you should so know me. The courtesy of nations allows you my better, in that you are the first-born; but the same tradition takes not away my blood were there twenty brothers betwixt us. I have as much of my father in me as you; albeit I confess, your coming before me is nearer to his reverence.

Oliver. What, boy!

Orlando. Come, come, elder brother, you are too young in this.

Oliver. Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?

Orlando. I am no villain: I am the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Bois; he was my father; and he is thrice a villain that says such a father begot villains. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pulled out thy tongue for saying so; thou hast railed on thyself.

Adam. Sweet masters, be patient; for your father's remembrance, be at accord.

Oliver. Let me go, I say.

Orlando. I will not till I please; you shall hear me. My father charged you in his will to give me good education; you have trained me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like qualities. The spirit of my father grows strong in me, and I will no longer endure it; therefore allow me such exercises as may become a gentleman, or give me the poor allottery my father left me by testament; with that I will go buy my fortunes.

Oliver. And what wilt thou do, — beg, when that is spent? Well, sir, get you in; I will not long be troubled with you. You shall have some part of your will; I pray you, leave me.

Orlando. I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.

Oliver. Get you with him, you old dog.

Adam. Is "old dog" my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master, he would not have spoke such a word.

There waits without, Charles, the Duke's wrestler, a good-natured, but brutal athlete, who has come thither with a kind intention, but has neither wit nor moral purpose enough to stick to it when he finds that a crime would be acceptable to his social superior. His kindness was a mere impulse, — when opposed by self-interest it withers away.

Charles. Good morrow to your worship.

Oliver. Good Monsieur Charles, what 's the new news at the new court?

Charles. There 's no news at the court, sir, but the old news, — that is, that the Duke is banished by his younger brother the new Duke; and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose land and revenues enrich the new Duke; therefore he gives them good leave to wander.

Oliver. Can you tell if Rosalind, the old Duke's daughter, be banished with her father?

Charles. O, no, for the new Duke's daughter, her cousin, so loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together, that she would have followed her to exile, or have died to stay behind her. She is at the court, and no less beloved of her uncle than his own daughter. And never two ladies loved as they do.

Oliver. Where will the old Duke live?

Charles. They say he is already in the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.

Oliver. What, you wrestle to-morrow before the new Duke?

Charles. Marry, do I, sir; and I came to acquaint you with a matter. I am given, sir, secretly to understand that your younger brother, Orlando, hath a disposition to come in disguised against me to try a fall. To-morrow, sir, I wrestle for my credit; and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit him well. Your brother is but young, and tender; and for your love, I would be loath to foil him, as I must for my own honor, if he come in: therefore, out of my love to you, I came hither to acquaint you withal; that either you might stay him from his intendment, or brook such disgrace well as he shall run into; in that it is a thing of his own search, and altogether against my will.

Oliver. Charles, I thank thee for thy love to me, which thou shalt find I will most kindly requite. I had myself notice of my brother's purpose herein, and have by underhand means labored to dissuade him from it; but he is resolute. I 'll tell thee, Charles,—it is the stubbornest young fellow of France; full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and villanous contriver against me, his natural brother. Therefore, use thy discretion; I had as lief thou didst break his neck as his finger. And thou wert best look to 't; for if thou dost him any slight disgrace, or if he do not mightily grace himself on thee, he will practise against thee by poison, entrap thee by some treacherous device, and never leave thee till he hath ta'en thy life by some indirect means or other: for I assure thee, and almost with tears I speak it, there is not one so young and so villanous this day living. I speak but brotherly of him; but should I anatomize him to thee as he is, I must blush and weep, and thou must look pale and wonder.

Charles. I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he come to-morrow, I 'll give him his payment. If ever he go alone again, I 'll never wrestle for prize more. And so, God keep your worship!

[*Exit.*

Oliver. Farewell, good Charles. Now will I stir this gamester. I hope I shall see an end of him; for my soul, yet I know not why, hates nothing more than he. Yet he 's gentle; never schooled and yet learned; full of noble device; of all sorts enchantingly beloved; and, indeed, so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own people who best know him, that I am altogether misprized. But it shall not be so long! This wrestler shall clear all. Nothing remains but that I kindle the boy thither; which now I 'll go about.

This last speech is one of the puzzles that concern Oliver. How *could* a man not utterly sold to the devil give such a character of his brother, and yet be planning his destruction and disgrace? I confess I can throw little light on Oliver. Perhaps as you read over the play something may suggest itself to yourselves.

Orlando is presented to us just as he is awakening into manhood. He has looked about him, and appreciates his position. He has no career before him, by reason of his defective bringing up, but he longs to go forth into the world; and knowing himself to be at least a practised athlete, — having long tried his strength among the rustics on his brother's farm, — he proposes, secretly, as we have heard, to appear at court and try his strength with the Duke's wrestler.

Scene 2.

In this scene we are introduced to Rosalind. She and Celia are another pair of Shakspeare's sweet girl-friends. Of Rosalind, Lady Martin says: "Hers is a sweet, composite nature, joyous, buoyant, and deep womanly. She has tenderness, and an active intellect, disciplined by fine culture as well as tempered by a certain native distinction." Indeed, in Rosalind throughout there is such a flavor of high breeding that I cannot conceive how the part could be acted by any woman who was not a lady.

Mrs. Jameson says of her: "She is fresh as the morning, light as the breeze. She is as witty, voluble, and sprightly as Beatrice, but in a style altogether distinct. In both the wit is equally unconscious; but in Beatrice it plays about us like the lightning, dazzling but also alarming, while the wit

of Rosalind bubbles up and sparkles like the living fountain, refreshing all around."

The merry greenwood is the fit setting for Rosalind. Celia needs from her none of the protecting, patronizing care that Hero receives from Beatrice. Indeed, up to the time the play opens Celia has been the protectress of her cousin. We already know their story, — how Rosalind's father, having neglected his ducal duties, like Prospero, has been dethroned and banished by his brother Frederick, Celia's father. Rosalind had been kept at court as companion and playfellow to her cousin Celia; but the usurping Duke, finding how popular her graces make her, is beginning to be jealous of her. Dearly as Rosalind loves Celia, and little (it appears) as she has known her banished father, she cannot forget his wrongs. Celia believes herself more matter-of-fact, and less romantic than Rosalind. "She is," says the "Monthly Packet," "a very charming little lady, with her loving heart, and generous ways; always thinking how she may compensate for her father's misdeeds, though continually, as she owns, 'stabbed by his harsh and jealous temper.' She has a pretty dignity about her, suiting her position, and a decided fashion of repressing any approach to a liberty; but this is no check to her frank gayety when chatting alone with Rosalind or whiling away leisure moments with the court fool, Touchstone." Celia's description of herself would have been that she was practical, quiet, and sensible, yet in the end she belies all these qualities. People in common life, like certain characters in the Bible, generally fail upon the very points in which they consider themselves most secure.

When the two girls first appear before us Celia is exhorting her cousin to be merry. Now, merriment was in Rosalind's

very nature. We fancy she has been saddened by perceiving how precarious her position is fast becoming at court; by anxieties about her future, — such anxieties, in short, as were beginning, as we have seen, to weigh heavily on Orlando; anxieties which present themselves with keen vividness to every thoughtful girl or man,

> "Standing with reluctant feet
> Where the brook and river meet," —

at the entrance into maturity.

As girls will do, the cousins talk of love, and, as girls will also do, they make sport of it. Rosalind utters a truth to which she lived to be an exception, namely, that the sweetest girls are apt to be to men the least attractive. As I have often said, God seems to keep his noblest women unmarried, that they may do the work that married women are withheld from doing. As Rosalind and Celia make play with their keen wits, there comes in the court fool, Touchstone. The fools of old times were usually scatter-brained men, noted for their cleverness (in a certain way). They acted to court-life like the chorus to the characters in a Greek play. They were privileged to say anything they pleased, subject to being whipped if they became offensive. They, and *they only*, could tell their lord home truths. They met him on an equality, just because of an inferiority of station so absolute that there was no disputing it, — exactly as we can be on more familiar terms with a trusted colored servant than we can be with a white one. Touchstone had probably known the girls from their babyhood, and is all ready with his jokes as soon as they come together.

Touchstone. Mistress, you must come away to your father.
Celia. Were you made the messenger?

Touchstone. No, by mine *honor;* but I was bid to come for you.

Rosalind. Where learned you that oath, fool?

Touchstone. Of a certain knight, that swore by his honor they were good pancakes, and swore by his honor the mustard was naught. Now, I'll stand to it the pancakes were naught, and the mustard was good; and yet was not the knight forsworn.

Celia. How prove you that, in the great heaps of your knowledge?

Rosalind. Ay, marry; now unmuzzle your wisdom.

Touchstone. Stand you both forth now; stroke your chins, and swear by your beards that I am a knave.

Celia. By our beards, if we had them, thou art.

Touchstone. By my knavery, if I had it, then I were; but if you swear by that that is not, you are not forsworn. No more was this knight, swearing by his honor, for he never had any; or if he had, he had sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that mustard.

As they jest, in comes a courtier, — Monsieur le Beau; his entrance being prefaced by Celia's remark that "the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show."

Le Beau in his first speech mincingly promises the ladies "spot" (sport), and Celia mimics him.

Le Beau. Fair princess, you have lost much good spot.

Celia. Spot? Of what color?

Le Beau. What color, madam? How shall I answer you?

Rosalind. As wit and fortune will.

Touchstone. Or as the destinies decree.

Le Beau. You amaze me, ladies: I would have told you of good wrestling, which you have lost the sight of.

Rosalind. Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.

Le Beau. I will tell you the beginning, and if it please your ladyships, you may see the end; for the best is yet to do; and here, where you are, they are coming to perform it.

Celia. Well, — the beginning, that is dead and buried.

Le Beau. There comes an old man, and his three sons, —

Celia. I could match this beginning with an old tale.

Le Beau. Three proper young men, of excellent growth and presence, —

Rosalind. With bills on their necks, — Be it known unto all men by these presents.

Le Beau. The eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke's wrestler; which Charles in a moment threw him, and broke three of his ribs, that there is little hope of life in him: so he served the second, and so the third. Yonder they lie; the poor old man, their father, making such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders take his part with weeping.

Rosalind. Alas!

Touchstone. But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have lost?

Le Beau. Why, this that I speak of.

Touchstone. Thus men may grow wiser every day! it is the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.

Celia. Or I, I promise thee.

Rosalind. But is there any else longs to see this broken music in his sides? is there yet another dotes upon rib-breaking? Shall we see this wrestling, cousin?

The girls dread seeing the wrestling, yet they resolve to stay, in hopes of putting a check upon its cruelty; and their subsequent inability to withdraw their eyes from the champion who has interested them is all true womanly.

"This scene of the wrestling," says the "Monthly Packet," "is picturesque in itself. The courtiers pour out upon the quiet lawn; the pages come and mark the ring; presently Duke Frederick arrives, followed by the unequal-looking combatants, Orlando's youthful grace contrasting with Charles' fully developed strength. This contrast evidently has inspired the Duke with an unusual measure of interest, which we see in his efforts to dissuade Orlando from the struggle, even to the degree of desiring the Princesses to try and influence him. Celia's pretty stateliness is very charming, as she gently represents to Orlando that he is very foolhardy; and Rosalind chimes in with more direct entreaty, and a device for saving the credit of the young champion.

He cannot yield the point even to them. He may not be very sanguine of success, but he has a crowd of boyish reasons for wanting to break his neck, — which seem drawn out of him by the girls' sympathetic eyes."

Duke Frederick. Come on; since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on his forwardness.

Rosalind. Is yonder the man?

Le Beau. Even he, madam.

Celia. Alas! he is too young; yet he looks successfully.

Duke Frederick. How now, daughter and cousin? are you crept hither to see the wrestling?

Rosalind. Ay, my liege; so please you give us leave.

Duke Frederick. You will take little delight in it, I can tell you; there is such odds in the men. In pity of the challenger's youth I would fain dissuade him, but he will not be entreated. Speak to him, ladies; see if you can move him. [*The Duke goes apart.*

Le Beau. Monsieur the challenger, the Princesses call for you.

Orlando. I attend them with all respect and duty.

Rosalind. Young man, have you challenged Charles, the wrestler?

Orlando. No, fair Princess; he is the general challenger. I come but in, as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth.

Celia. Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. You have seen cruel proof of this man's strength. If you saw yourself with our eyes, or knew yourself with our judgment, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprize. We pray you, for your own sake, to embrace your own safety, and give over this attempt.

Rosalind. Do, young sir; your reputation shall not therefore be misprized: we will make it our suit to the Duke, that the wrestling might not go forward.

Orlando. I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts; wherein I confess me much guilty, to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial; wherein if I be foiled, there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so: I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.

Rosalind. The little strength that I have, I would it were with you.

Celia. And mine, to eke out hers.

Rosalind. Fare you well. Pray heaven, I be deceived in you.

Celia. Your heart's desires be with you!

Charles. Come, where is this young gallant, that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth?

Orlando. Ready, sir; but his will hath in it a more modest working.

Duke Frederick. You shall try but one fall.

Charles. No, I warrant your grace; you shall not entreat him to a second, that have so mightily persuaded him from a first.

Orlando. You mean to mock me after; you should not have mocked me before: but come your ways.

Rosalind. Now, Hercules be thy speed, young man!

Celia. I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow by the leg. [*Charles and Orlando wrestle.*

Rosalind. O excellent young man!

Celia. If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I can tell who should down. [*Charles is thrown. Shout.*

Duke Frederick. No more, no more.

Orlando. Yes, I beseech your grace; I am not yet well breathed.

Duke Frederick. How dost thou, Charles?

Le Beau. He cannot speak, my lord.

Duke Frederick. Bear him away. What is thy name, young man?

Orlando. Orlando, my liege; the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Bois.

Duke Frederick. I would thou hadst been son to some one else. . . . But fare thee well; thou art a gallant youth. I would thou hadst told me of another father.

The injustice of the hard, vindictive Duke, who will not reward the son of his old enemy, dashes Orlando's hopes of an opening to court favor to the ground. Perhaps it had already gone hard with him to make up his mind to seek service with his father's enemy; *now* he asserts his pride in that dead father, and awakens a deeper thrill of sympathy in the heart of Rosalind. But it is Celia who — having no self-consciousness to hold her back, and a self-imposed mission

to pour balm into the wounds made by her father — is foremost to comfort him.

Lady Martin says of this passage in the play, "It is one of the most difficult scenes for an actress to act. Rosalind says so little, but so much is implied." The gentle kindness of the Princesses, but above all the love at first sight which springs up between Orlando and Rosalind, completely bewilder the young man. He stands stupefied; he can say no word. First, Celia urges her cousin, (who is also under the bewildering consciousness of a new sensation) to go forward and comfort and encourage the poor young fellow. Then Rosalind, taking her gold chain from her neck, gives it to Orlando with a few sweet, sad words of personal sympathy. He returns her no thanks. Rosalind pauses, expecting them; then says, "Shall we go, cousin?" Celia bids farewell. Orlando, as they depart, murmurs a few words; and Rosalind, loath to go, fancies he has recalled them. In the confusion of the moment she half betrays her feelings, — "Sir, you have overthrown more than your enemies." Celia nips this demonstration of interest in the bud, repeating Rosalind's own words: "Will you go, cousin?"

As Orlando still stands bewildered, there enters Le Beau (a man marred by his court life) with a warning that he had better quit the court and danger. Le Beau lets his true self come out now. He has laid aside the affectations he had shown when in company with the ladies, and appears a courteous, kindly, upright gentleman.

Orlando takes little heed of his own danger, so anxious is he to know which lady is the Duke's daughter. "The tall one," says Le Beau, "is daughter to the banished Duke; the

shorter is her cousin." Le Beau has not named them, but Orlando at once knows that his love's name is Rosalind.

Scene 3.

Then comes a scene in which sensible Celia teases her cousin for her sudden fancy. Notice Celia's reproving remark that if women walk not in trodden paths their very petticoats will catch the burs.

Celia. Why, cousin; why, Rosalind! Cupid have mercy! — Not a word?

Rosalind. Not one to throw at a dog.

Celia. No, thy words are too precious to be cast away upon curs, throw some of them at me; come, lame me with reasons.

Rosalind. Then there were two cousins laid up; when the one should be lamed with reasons, and the other mad without any.

Celia. But is all this for your father?

Rosalind. No, some of it is for my father's child. O, how full of briers is this working-day world!

Celia. They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery; if we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them.

Rosalind. I could shake them off my coat; these burs are in my heart.

Celia. Hem them away.

Rosalind. I would try; if I could cry *hem*, and have *him*.

Celia. Come, come, wrestle with thy affections.

Rosalind. O, they take the part of a better wrestler than myself.

Celia. O, a good wish upon you! you will try in time, in despite of a fall. But, turning these jests out of service, let us talk in good earnest: Is it possible, on such a sudden, you should fall into so strong a liking with old Sir Rowland's youngest son?

Rosalind. The Duke, my father, loved his father dearly.

Celia. Doth it therefore ensue that you should love his son dearly? By this kind of chase, I should hate him, for my father hated his father dearly; yet I hate not Orlando.

Rosalind. No, 'faith, hate him not, for my sake.

Celia. Why should I not? doth he not deserve well?

Rosalind. Let me love him for that; and do you love him because I do. Look, here comes the Duke.

Celia. With his eyes full of anger.

The Duke indeed comes in with angry eyes, prepared (under what sudden prompting we know not) to carry out a purpose he has already entertained of banishing poor Rosalind. Rosalind's mingled reasoning and pleading with her uncle is very beautiful. When he calls her "a traitor's daughter" her patience gives way, and she retorts upon himself as the traitor; but in an instant changes her proud tone, and beseeches him as her liege. Celia's description of their friendship is very celebrated.

Rosalind. Treason is not inherited, my lord;
Or, if we did derive it from our friends,
What 's that to me? My father was no traitor!
Then, my good liege, mistake me not so much
To think my poverty is treacherous.

Celia. Dear sovereign, hear me speak.

Duke Frederick. Ay, Celia, we stayed her for your sake;
Else had she with her father ranged along.

Celia. I did not then entreat to have her stay;
It was your pleasure, and your own remorse.
I was too young that time to value her;
But now I know her. If she be a traitor,
Why, so am I. We still have slept together,
Rose at an instant, learned, played, eat together,
And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,
Still we went coupled and inseparable.

But Celia's pleading is of no avail. Rosalind is banished, and is not permitted to delay her departure. If she outstays the time appointed her the penalty is death. She stands overwhelmed with grief, and Celia is the counsellor and comforter; though as soon as Rosalind recovers herself she

enters with great spirit into Celia's plans, and is ready with her own practical suggestions.

Celia. O my poor Rosalind! whither wilt thou go?
Wilt thou change fathers? I will give thee mine.
I charge thee, be not thou more grieved than I am.
Rosalind. I have more cause.
Celia. Thou hast not, cousin;
Prithee, be cheerful; know'st thou not the Duke
Hath banished me, his daughter?
Rosalind. That he hath not.
Celia. No? hath not? Rosalind lacks then the love
Which teacheth thee that thou and I am one.
Shall we be sundered? shall we part, sweet girl?
No; let my father seek another heir.
Therefore devise with me how we may fly;
Whither to go, and what to bear with us.
And do not seek to take your change upon you,
To bear your griefs yourself, and leave me out;
For, by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee.
Rosalind. Why, whither shall we go?
Celia. To seek my uncle.
Rosalind. Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far!
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.
Celia. I'll put myself in poor and mean attire,
And with a kind of umber smirch my face;
The like do you; so shall we pass along,
And never stir assailants.
Rosalind. Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand; and (in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will)
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside;
As many other mannish cowards have,
That do outface it with their semblances.
Celia. What shall I call thee, when thou art a man?

Rosalind. I 'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page ;
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.
But what will you be called ?
Celia. Something that hath a reference to my state ;
No longer Celia, but Aliena.
Rosalind. But, cousin, what if we essayed to steal
The clownish fool out of your father's court ?
Would he not be a comfort to our travel ?
Celia. He 'll go along o'er the wide world with me ;
Leave me alone to woo him. Let 's away,
And get our jewels and our wealth together ;
Devise the fittest time, and safest way
To hide us from pursuit that will be made
After my flight. Now go we, in content,
To liberty, and not to banishment.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

The first scene of this act is in the forest of Arden. No doubt the name of Arden endeared itself to Shakspeare, being the maiden name of his own mother. It was also a place already known to poets and other wanderers in Fairy-land, for in Ardennes, not far from Charlemagne's camp, occurred many notable adventures of the Paladins. There is also an actual Forest of Ardennes in the eastern part of France ; but the one in question has no geographical position. In this scene we see the banished Duke, a jovial gentleman, who probably was not ill content to exchange his dukedom for the greenwood. One of his company is a lord, once a man of dissipated and irregular habits, now called by his companions "the melancholy Jaques." Jaques has been a puzzle to commentators. Victor Hugo contrasts him with Touchstone (called in the French translation Pierre la Touche), — the one a pessimist, the other an optimist by nature. Maginn has written a celebrated paper on him. I

think myself that he is the sketch of one whom Shakspeare must have deeply studied and often seen; a man who by sensual excesses has not only marred his life, but weakened the spring of all enjoyment in him. A man of that kind never can know the frame of mind described by Archbishop Trench when he says: —

> "Wiser it were to welcome and make ours
> Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings, —
> Kind welcomes, sunshine, song of birds, and flowers,
> With a child's pure delight in little things;
> And of the griefs unborn to rest secure,
> Knowing that mercy ever will endure."

As Coleridge when enervated by opium speaks of his own feelings with respect to the beauties of nature, —

> "I see them all, so excellently fair
> I see, not feel, how beautiful they are," —

so Jaques, with apparently no great, sharp misery of his own to trouble him, lies under the pleasant shade of the oaks, and moralizes, with the wounded stag for his text, on the greed, selfishness, and unkindness of other people. You may observe that, as to greed, Jaques, in spite of sentimental sobbings, went to the dinner-tent and dined on venison, and was by no means well pleased to have real want break in upon his dinner. Observe too, that the passage descriptive of the wounded stag, and all expressions of real pity for him come from the mouth of the nameless lord, not that of Jaques. Jaques is the confirmed sentimentalist. It is hard to rouse him to action. With him all strength of will and all the motive power of enthusiasm have passed away. There is nothing real whatever in his melancholy; it is simply dis-

content born of satiety. Here is the account of him, beginning with part of Rosalind's father's speech.

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.
Amiens. I would not change it. Happy is your grace,
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune
Into so quiet and so sweet a style.
Duke. Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
And yet it irks me, the poor dappled fools —
Being native burghers of this desert city —
Should, in their own confines, with forkèd heads
Have their round haunches gored.
1 *Lord.* Indeed, my lord,
The melancholy Jaques grieves at that;
And, in that kind, swears you do more usurp
Than doth your brother that hath banished you.
To-day, my lord of Amiens and myself
Did steal behind him, as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood;
To the which place a poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunters' aim had ta'en a hurt,
Did come to languish; and, indeed, my lord,
The wretched animal heaved forth such groans,
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting; and the big round tears
Coursed one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase. And thus the hairy fool,
Much markèd of the melancholy Jaques,
Stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears.
Duke. But what said Jaques?
Did he not moralize this spectacle?
1 *Lord.* O yes, into a thousand similes.
First, for his weeping in the needless stream;

"Poor deer," quoth he, "thou mak'st a testament
As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more
To that which had too much." Then, being alone,
Left and abandoned of his velvet friends,
"'T is right," quoth he; "thus misery doth part
The flux of company." Anon a careless herd,
Full of the pasture, jumps along by him,
And never stays to greet him. "Ay," quoth Jaques,
"Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens!
'T is just the fashion. Wherefore do you look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?"
Thus, most invectively, he pierceth through
The body of the country, city, court,
Yea, and of this our life; swearing that we
Are mere usurpers, tyrants, and what 's worse —
To fright the animals and to kill them up
In their assigned and native dwelling-place.
Duke. And did you leave him in this contemplation?
2 *Lord.* We did, my lord, weeping, and commenting
Upon the sobbing deer.

Coleridge is said to have remarked in connection with this lord's account of Jaques, as he lay watching the hurt deer, that "Shakspeare never gives any description of rustic scenery merely for its own sake, or to show how he can paint natural objects; but while he now and then displays marvellous accuracy and minuteness of knowledge, he usually only touches upon the larger features and broader characteristics, leaving the fillings-up to the imagination. Thus, in this passage, he describes an oak of many centuries in a single line, —

Under an oak whose antique root peeps out.

Other, and inferior writers, would have dwelt on this description, and worked it out with pettiness and impertinence of detail. In Shakspeare the 'antique root' furnishes the whole picture."

Scene 2.

Meantime the flight of Celia, Touchstone, and Rosalind is discovered. Some evil-minded courtier (who may have observed something in the looks of the young people, each attracted by the other) suggests that Orlando may be of the party. The Duke in a fury sends for the elder brother, Oliver.

Scene 3.

We know well that Orlando has had no understanding with the ladies, and in this scene we see him back again in his brother's house, and in company with the good old Adam. Is it possible that Adam may here slander Oliver? One can more readily believe that the old man was misled by his fears than that such diabolical intentions could be harbored by the man who was the destined husband of sweet Celia.

Orlando, with his small experience of life, needs some one to strike out a plan for him. Adam springs to the rescue, offering his master's disinherited son his little treasure.

How far back must we go to reach the days of ideal domestic service? Orlando speaks of "old time" servants in the regretful tone we hear around us. Adam is hardly coherent at first in his anger and his anguish, so that Orlando finds it hard to make out what is the matter.

Adam. O, my gentle master!
O, my sweet master! O, you memory
Of old Sir Rowland! Why! — what make you here?
Why are you virtuous? Why do people love you?
And wherefore are you gentle, strong, and valiant?
Why would you be so fond to overcome
The bony prizer of th' ill-tempered Duke?
Your praise is come too swiftly home before you:

O, what a world is this, when what is comely
Envenoms him that bears it!

Orlando. Why, what 's the matter?

Adam. O unhappy youth,
Come not within these doors. Within this roof
The enemy of all your graces lives.
Your brother — no! no brother — yet the son —
Yet *not* the son — I will not call him son
Of him I was about to call his father —
Hath heard your praises; and this night he means
To burn the lodging where you use to lie,
And you within it: if he fail of that,
He will have other means to cut you off.
I overheard him, and his practices.
This is no place, this house is but a butchery;
Abhor it, fear it, do not enter it.

Orlando. Why, whither, Adam, would'st thou have me go?

Adam. No matter whither, so you come not here.

Orlando. What, would'st thou have me go and beg my food?
Or, with a base and boisterous sword, enforce
A thievish living on the common road?
This I must do, or know not what to do:
Yet this I will not do, do how I can;
I rather will subject me to the malice
Of a diverted blood, and bloody brother.

Adam. But do not so: I have five hundred crowns,
The thrifty hire I saved under your father,
Which I did store, to be my foster-nurse,
When service should in my old limbs lie lame,
And unregarded age in corners thrown;
Take that: and He that doth the ravens feed,
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age! Here is the gold;
All this I give you; let me be your servant.
Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty;
For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood;
Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo
The means of weakness and debility;
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,

Frosty, but kindly. Let me go with you;
I 'll do the service of a younger man
In all your business and necessities.
Orlando. O good old man; how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed!
Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
Where none will sweat but for promotion;
And having that, do choke their service up
Even with the having: it is not so with thee.
But, poor old man, thou prun'st a rotten tree,
That cannot so much as a blossom yield,
In lieu of all thy pains and husbandry.
But come thy ways, we 'll go along together;
And ere we have thy youthful wages spent,
We 'll light upon some settled low content.
Adam. Master, go on; and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty.
From seventeen years till now almost fourscore
Here lived I, but I now live here no more.
At seventeen years many their fortunes seek;
But at fourscore, it is too late a week;
Yet fortune cannot recompense me better,
Than to die well, and not my master's debtor.

Notice the contrast between Jaques and Adam in one passage of this scene, — Adam all action, Jaques all profitless musing; Adam generous, Jaques self-absorbed; Adam's winter of life "frosty but kindly," Jaques enervated and cynical.

Scene 4.

Now at last we are in the heart of the Forest of Arden; the very forest where another Orlando, and Rinaldo and Angelica drank of the enchanted fountains. Rosalind is in boy's clothes; Celia a pretty shepherdess, too weary to speak; and Touchstone, grumbling, is still clothed in motley.

Rosalind. O Jupiter, how weary are my spirits!

Touchstone. I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.

Rosalind. I could find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel, and to cry like a woman; but I must comfort the weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat; therefore, courage, good Aliena.

Celia. I pray you, bear with me; I can go no further.

Touchstone. For my part, I had rather bear with you than bear you; yet I should bear no cross if I did bear you, for I think you have no money in your purse.

Rosalind. Well, this is the Forest of Arden.

Touchstone. Ay, now am I in Arden, the more fool I.
When I was at home I was in a better place;
But travellers must be content.

Rosalind. Ay, be it so, good Touchstone. Look you, who comes here? A young man, and an old, in solemn talk.

The men approaching are two shepherds, — Corin, and a love-sick young fellow, Silvius by name, who is in love with pretty Phœbe. Extravagant as Silvius' love complaints are, they move the heart of Rosalind with a fellow-feeling. Though weary, she is not too weary to discuss love with Touchstone, who gives her some hints out of his own experience.

Rosalind. Alas! poor shepherd, searching of thy wound,
I have by hard adventure found mine own.

Touchstone. And I mine. I remember when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone, and bade him take that for coming to see Jane Smile; and I remember the kissing of her washing-bat, and the cows' teats that her pretty chapped hands had milked; and I remember the wooing of a peascod of her; from whom I took two cods, and giving her them again, said with weeping tears, "Wear these for my sake." We, that are true lovers, run into strange capers; but as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love mortal in folly.

Rosalind. Thou speak'st wiser than thou art 'ware of.

Touchstone. Nay, I shall ne'er be 'ware of mine own wit till I break my shins against it.

Rosalind [*sings*]. Jove! Jove! this shepherd's passion
Is much upon my fashion.

Touchstone. And mine; but it grows something stale with me.
Celia. I pray you, one of you question yond man,
If he for gold will give us any food;
I faint almost to death.

Rosalind checks Touchstone for the rough way in which, at Celia's request, he calls after the shepherds, and she courteously entreats them, for the sake of the young girl with her, to show them some spot where they may rest.

Corin tells them of a cottage they can purchase not far off, and the cousins, with the liberality of girlhood and high station, proceed to buy the property off-hand.

Scene 5.

We here see Jaques himself, persuading Amiens to sing. There was no opera in England at that period, and Shakspeare's comedies are always provided with songs, to be sung by the musical members of his dramatic company.

SONG.

Amiens. Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Jaques. I 'll give you a verse to this note, that I made yesterday in despite of my invention.

Amiens. And I 'll sing it.

Jaques. Thus it goes : —

If it do come to pass,
That any man turn ass,
Leaving his wealth and ease,
A stubborn will to please,
Ducdàme, ducdàme, ducdàme;
Here shall he see,
Gross fools as he,
An if he will come to Ami.

Amiens. What 's that *ducdàme?*

Jaques. 'T is a Greek invocation, to call fools into a circle. I 'll go sleep if I can ; if I cannot, I 'll rail against all the first-born of Egypt.

Amiens. And I 'll go seek the Duke ; his banquet is prepared.

[*Exeunt severally.*

"Ducdàme," which Jaques tries to pass off as a Greek invocation, is doubtless a parody on "Come hither, come hither, come hither," in the song ; and may possibly be an early version of Mrs. Brown's well-known "invocation" of her ducks : "Dilly, dilly, dilly, come and be killed ! " which they decline to respond to.

Jaques inveighs heartily against the folly of quitting good homes for the greenwood ; and yet in the end, with characteristic inconsistency, he elects to make his abode in the greenwood rather than go home. The pressing required by Amiens is delightful mockery of a universal affectation.

Scene 6.

In this scene we have Adam, the good retainer, fainting for weariness and lack of nourishment. "Oh ! blessed was that man," cries Coleridge, "who, when Shakspeare acted Adam, bore Shakspeare on his back ! "

Adam. Dear master, I can go no further. O! I die for food. Here lie I down and measure out my grave. Farewell, kind master!

Orlando. Why, how now, Adam? no greater heart in thee? Live a little; comfort a little; cheer thyself a little; if this uncouth forest yield anything savage I will either be food for it, or bring it for food to thee. For my sake be comfortable; hold death a while at the arm's end; I will be here with thee presently, and if I bring thee not something to eat, I'll give thee leave to die; but if thou diest before I come, thou art a mocker of my labor. Well said; thou lookest cheerly, and I'll be with thee quickly. Yet thou liest in the bleak air; come! I will bear thee to some shelter; and thou shalt not die for want of a dinner if there live anything in this desert. Cheerly, good Adam.

How much our appreciation of things around us is influenced by our personal circumstances! The beautiful forest of Arden, to us the very ideal of bosky loveliness, is to Orlando "this uncouth forest," this "desert place," as he looks around, and can see no relief for his beloved Adam.

Scene 7.

In the court of the banished Duke Jaques appears to have been "the animated No!" — the "tuneful discord," the comic grumbler. It seems he had met Touchstone in the wood, and has something to tell about him as they sit down to dinner. I think Touchstone had previously fallen in with Jaques, possibly in the days when Jaques was a courtier, and that he had also overheard him when he soliloquized that morning about the stag. He seems to have given him a sort of parody of himself.

Jaques. A fool, a fool! — I met a fool i' the forest,
A motley fool; a miserable world! —
As I do live by food, I met a fool;
Who laid him down and basked him in the sun,
And railed on lady Fortune in good terms,
In good set terms, — and yet a motley fool.

"Good-morrow, fool," quoth I. "No, sir," quoth he,
"Call me not fool, till heaven hath sent me fortune."
And then he drew a dial from his poke;
And looking on it with lack-lustre eye,
Says, very wisely, "It is ten o'clock.
Thus may we see," quoth he, "how the world wags.
'T is but an hour ago since it was nine;
And after an hour more 't will be eleven;
And so, from hour to hour, we ripe, and ripe,
And then, from hour to hour, we rot, and rot,
And thereby hangs a tale." When I did hear
The motley fool thus moral on the time,
My lungs began to crow like chanticleer,
That fools should be so deep-contemplative;
And I did laugh, sans intermission,
An hour by his dial. O, noble fool!
A worthy fool! Motley's the only wear.
Duke. What fool is this?

Jaques goes on describing fools, and wishing he wore motley, till the Duke says, "Well! you shall have a coat." "Then," cries Jaques, —

I will through and through
Cleanse the foul body of the infected world,
If they will patiently receive my medicine.
Duke. Fie on thee! I 'll tell thee what thou would'st do.
Jaques. What would I do but good?
Duke. Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin.
For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
As sensual as the brutish sting itself.
And all the embossèd sores, and headed evils
That thou with license of free foot hast caught
Would'st thou disgorge into the general world.

It seems to me this passage, containing the views of the grand master of fiction, might well be considered by those who, mistaking the legitimate purposes of poetry or the novel, "nose," as Ruskin says, "round the world's garbage

heaps," and excuse themselves for their revelations by a professed purpose of improving the world.

As the talk goes on, Orlando with drawn sword rushes in upon the banquet. Here is genuine want, mental agony, stark misery, in contrast to Jaques and his sentimentality.

Orlando. Forbear, and eat no more!
Jaques. Why, I have eat none yet.
Orlando. Nor shalt not, till necessity be served.
Jaques. Of what kind should this cock come of?
Duke. Art thou emboldened, man, by thy distress,
Or else a rude despiser of good manners,
That in civility thou seem'st so empty?
Orlando. You touched my vein at first. The thorny point
Of bare distress hath ta'en from me the show
Of smooth civility. Yet I am well brought up,
And know some manners. But forbear, I say.
He dies that touches any of this food
Till I and my affairs are answerèd.
Duke. What would you have? Your gentleness shall force,
More than your force move us to gentleness.
Orlando. I almost die for food, and let me have it.
Duke. Sit down and feed; and welcome to our table.
Orlando. Speak you so gently? Pardon me, I pray you.
I thought that all things had been savage here;
And therefore put I on the countenance
Of stern commandment. But whate'er you are,
That in this desert inaccessible,
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time, —
If ever you have looked on better days;
If ever been where bells have knolled to church;
If ever sat at any good man's feast;
If ever from your eye-lids wiped a tear,
And know what 't is to pity, and be pitied;
Let gentleness my strong enforcement be.
In the which hope, I blush, and hide my sword.
Duke. True is it that we have seen better days;
And have with holy bell been knolled to church;

And sat at good men's feasts ; and wiped our eyes
Of drops that sacred pity hath engendered ;
And therefore sit you down in gentleness,
And take upon command what help we have,
That to your wanting may be ministered.

Orlando. Then but forbear your food a little while,
Whiles, like a doe, I go to find my fawn,
And give it food. There is an old poor man,
Who after me hath many a weary step
Limped in pure love ; till he be first sufficed, —
Oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger, —
I will not touch a bit.

Duke. Go find him out,
And we will nothing waste till you return.

Orlando. I thank ye ; and be blessed for your good comfort !

[*Exit.*

Jaques is for a moment put out of countenance, but soon recovering himself, answers the Duke's remark, — that the world is like a theatre, that presents more woeful pageants than the one they are themselves playing, — by his celebrated reflection that "all the world 's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

All the world 's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits, and their entrances ;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then, the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly, to school. And then, the lover ;
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then, a soldier ;
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice ;
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,

With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon;
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big, manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Maginn says of this passage that the evils it complains of are all common-place, and all perfectly consistent with man's happiness. It would be cruelty to keep the boy from knowledge; the lover is not unhappy penning his foolish poetry; the soldier loves the battle and the war-shout, and (whatever Jaques himself might do) considers reputation well purchased by the danger; the justice is complaisant and comfortable; the lean old man in his loose hose and slippers has those about him who take charge of his wants, and smooth his path out of the world; and if old age comes on with loss of teeth, eye-sight, and vigor, friends are at least thankful that the veteran has lived so long. There is nothing to move to melancholy in Jaques' picture nearly so much as the thought that there are Adams who die uncared for, and Orlandos whom suffering drives, despite their better nature, into crime and violence.

When Adam and Orlando have been welcomed to the sylvan dining-table, the Duke, with the politeness of an Homeric chief, forbears to question them until their wants are satisfied, but turning to Amiens requests a song from him. That song is music itself in words. Orlando, when he

tells his story, is welcomed by the banished Duke as good Sir Rowland's son, and his fortunes are assured. Here is Amiens' song: —

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy touch is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! Sing heigh ho, unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Here, I presume, he lifts his glass.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky;
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh ho! Sing heigh ho, unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly!

Act III. *Scene* 1.

When anything degrading or disagreeable is to be done in this play it takes place under a roof. Here Duke Frederick, in a room of his palace, is at high words with Oliver about his absconding brother. Oliver's excuse that he has never loved the lad incites the Duke to more violence, and the unnatural kinsman is stripped of all his property.

Scene 2.

In the forest of Arden we see Orlando hanging verses about Rosalind (whom he imagines safe and happy in her uncle's palace) upon all the green boughs. I think Shakspeare must have had in his mind Medoro's verses, found by that other Orlando, in which he celebrated "the fairest of her sex, Angelica." Then come in old Corin and Touchstone. The latter is amusing himself by puzzling and bewildering the old shepherd, who, from a practical point of view, has, on the subject they are discussing (the relative advantages of court and country life), the best of the argument.

Then Rosalind, dressed as Ganymede, the brother of the shepherdess Aliena, wanders by, reading a paper of verses she has found in praise of "Rosalind." The privileged fool looks over her shoulder as she reads, and parodies the verses. I think she hardly dares believe that these precious praises could have been addressed to herself. Then enters Celia (Aliena), reading verses, also to Rosalind, that *she* has found. The lines that have been picked up by Celia contain the lover's description of the person of his Rosalind.

Rosalind. Peace!
Here comes my sister, reading; stand aside.
Celia [*reads*]. Why should this desert silent be?
For it is unpeopled? No;
Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
That shall civil sayings show.
Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage;
That the stretching of a span
Buckles in his sum of age.
Some, of violated vows
'Twixt the souls of friend and friend;

But upon the fairest boughs,
Or at every sentence' end,
Will I Rosalinda write;
Teaching all that read to know
The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore heaven nature charged
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide enlarged.
Nature presently distilled
Helen's cheek, but not her heart;
Cleopatra's majesty;
Atalanta's better part;
Sad Lucretia's modesty.
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devised;
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
To have the touches dearest prized.
Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave.

"Atalanta's better part," I suppose, hints at the perfection of form that that lady displayed in her running.

Celia, always anxious to keep up appearances, sends Corin and Touchstone to a little distance while she discourses about the lines to Rosalind. At first Rosalind conceals her pleasure in the verses by her merriment, saying: "I was never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time, when I was an Irish rat." In old times, in Ireland, it was believed that rats could be charmed out of their haunts by rhymed spells.

Then begins one of the prettiest scenes in the whole play. One wonders how Shakspeare could have so perfectly understood girls in their relations to each other. Celia is teasing Rosalind; Rosalind is frantic with impatience, yet knows that the more she shows it the longer the provoking Celia will keep her waiting. She says of herself, "Dost thou think

I have doublet and hose in my disposition?" No, truly; among all Shakspeare's creations no girl perhaps is so "pure womanly" as Rosalind; and when she really has the certainty that Orlando is at hand, and (joy of joys!) knows too that Orlando loves her, how woman-true is her first thought: "Alas, the day! — what shall I do with my doublet and hose?" Then her rush of questions to her cousin, and her coaxing! her desire to slink away among the trees, in her strange dress, when she sees her lover approaching her with Jaques — all is so true to woman's nature!

Jaques and Orlando are in high dispute; but, as usual with Jaques, the sentiments expressed are only sham ones. Rosalind, hiding in her bower of green leaves, has the rapture of hearing her lover own his attachment to herself, in pretty, touching words. Jaques says, "So Rosalind is your love's name?" "Yes, most truly," answers Orlando. "I do not like her name," says the man of melancholy. "There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened," is the answer. Then Jaques, half suspecting that the lady in question may be Princess Rosalind, who was extraordinarily tall, asks, "What stature is she of?" and is answered, "Just as high as my heart."

Having learned, to her triumph and satisfaction, that Orlando's love for *her* is fully as great as hers for him, Rosalind, while further talk goes on between the two men, makes up her mind. She is sure of her ground now. She will treat herself to being wooed, even in her doublet and hose. Without saying a word to Celia, who would have raised objections, she comes forward suddenly, exaggerating her manliness. What woman who has ever loved does not envy her this chance of hearing, in the character of confidant, what her

lover feels for her? Lady Martin says: Only Shakspeare could have brought such a girl "into a position where she could, without revealing her own secret, probe the heart of her lover." Sweet Rosalind, — like sunshine playing on green leaves!

She breaks in on Orlando before Celia can stop her, with an "Hallo!" — and, "Do you hear me, forester?" She comes to talk of love, and she chooses the first opportunity of introducing the subject. She brings it in, indeed, "neck and heels." But Orlando at first will not respond to the cue.

Rosalind. I will speak to him like a saucy lackey, and under that habit play the knave with him. — Do you hear, forester?

Orlando. Very well; what would you?

Rosalind. I pray you, what is 't o' clock?

Orlando. You should ask me, what time o' day; there 's no clock in the forest.

Rosalind. Then there is no true lover in the forest; else sighing every minute, and groaning every hour, would detect the lazy foot of time as well as a clock.

Orlando. And why not the swift foot of time? had not that been as proper?

Rosalind. By no means, sir; Time travels in divers paces with divers persons: I 'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal.

Much amused by this unexpected encounter of a gay wit in such a lad, Orlando proceeds to question him, and learns that Time trots with a young maid before her marriage, ambles with a lazy priest, gallops with a thief, and stands still with a lawyer in his vacation.

Orlando. Where dwell you, pretty youth?

Rosalind. With this shepherdess, my sister, here in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat.

Orlando. Are you a native of this place?

Rosalind. As the coney, which you see dwell where it lies hidden.

Orlando. Your accent is something finer than you could purchase in so remote a dwelling.

Rosalind. I have been told so of many; but indeed, an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak. He was one that knew courtship well, for in his youth he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it; and I thank God, I am not a woman to be touched with so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal.

Orlando. Can you remember any of the principal evils that he laid to the charge of women?

Rosalind. There were none principal; they were all like one another as ha'pence are, — every one fault seeming monstrous till his fellow-fault came to match it.

Orlando. I prithee, recount some of them.

Rosalind. No, I will not cast away my physic, but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest that abuses our young plants with carving "Rosalind" on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth deifying the name of Rosalind. If I could meet that fancy-monger I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quartan fever of love on him.

Orlando. I am he that is so love-shaked; I pray you, tell me your remedy.

Rosalind. There is none of my uncle's marks upon you; he taught me how to know a man in love; in which cage of rushes, I am sure, you are not prisoner.

Orlando. What were his marks?

Rosalind. A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye, and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not, — but I pardon you for that; for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue. Then your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man; you are rather point-device in your accoutrements; as loving yourself, than seeming the lover of any other.

Orlando. Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

Rosalind. Me believe it? you may as soon make her that you love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to do than to confess she does; that is one of the points in the which women still give the lie

to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the tree, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

Orlando. I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, — that unfortunate he.

Rosalind. But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

Orlando. Neither rhyme nor reason can express how much.

Rosalind. Love is merely a madness; and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too; yet I profess curing it by counsel.

Orlando. Did you ever cure any so?

Rosalind. Yes, one; and in this manner: He was to imagine me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day to woo me: at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing, and liking; proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, — as boys and women are for the most part cattle of this color; would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humor of love, to a living humor of madness; which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him.

Orlando. I would not be cured, youth.

Rosalind. I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind, and come every day to my cote, and woo me.

Orlando. Now, by the faith of my love, I will; tell me where it is.

Rosalind. Go with me to it, and I 'll show it you; and by the way you shall tell me where in the forest you live; will you go?

Orlando. With all my heart, good youth.

Rosalind. Nay, you must call me Rosalind. Come, sister, will you go? [*Exeunt.*

Think what inimitable acting this scene must require. Above all things, Rosalind's high breeding and ladylikeness must be kept up throughout. Indeed, she thinks it necessary to invent a little fiction about the "old religious uncle" to account for the superiority she cannot repress, in connection

with her surroundings. How, when the subject of Orlando's love is started at last, she teases and makes fun of him! She mocks at his clothes, his looks, his verses, his sentiments; but she makes him repeat over and over again the precious truth that he loves Rosalind! During all their talk, Celia, with as bright a wit as Rosalind's, abstains from saying a word. Perhaps she keeps the more readily in the background lest Orlando, seeing her in woman's dress, should recognize her as one of the princesses. But Orlando knows nothing of the banishment of Rosalind, or of the flight of Celia, so never for a moment suspects the true character of these unusual shepherds. Besides, he has had so little experience of the world!

Scene 3.

The next scene is very amusing, but we must deny ourselves any extracts from it. Touchstone, in his idleness (for he seems to do very little work for his young ladies), has taken to courting a buxom shepherd-girl, Audrey. She is not comely, she is simply a good, devoted peasant girl, who admires Touchstone with all her simple heart, — loves him open-mouthed as it were, — and trots after him with a stolid obedience that probably has its attraction to the fool, accustomed to be ordered round by his superiors, and flouted by women. She does not understand one word in ten he says to her; but she feels it to be great promotion to marry him. Touchstone has proposed to her, and they are to meet in this sylvan spot the worthless vicar of a neighboring parish, who will marry them without bans, license, church-register, or witnesses, under a hedge. Such a marriage, unless within the precincts of the Fleet Prison, was not legal in England. Up to forty years ago, all marriages, whether of church-

people or dissenters, had to be solemnized in the parish church. Poor Audrey, I think, is wholly unaware of the trick that is being played on her; she places implicit trust in the lover who is entirely above her comprehension, and she might have come to grief, but that Jaques, lying under a tree hard by, hears what is going on, and his better nature, as a man and a gentleman, brings him to the rescue. He steps forth and without addressing himself to Audrey, flatters Touchstone by telling him he never should have expected a man of his breeding would wish to be married under a bush, like a beggar.

Jaques. And will you, being a man of your breeding, be married under a bush, like a beggar? Get you to church, and have a good priest that can tell you what marriage is; this fellow will but join you together as they join wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunk panel, and, like green timber, warp, warp.

Audrey is simply passive, but Touchstone, having the grace to be a little ashamed of himself, disappoints the ribald vicar of his marriage-fee.

This sudden appearance of Jaques in the character of the protector of rustic innocence may remind us of some of Bret Harte's damaged heroes, especially Oakhurst, in that touching story, "The Outcasts of Poker Flat." I have always held that there are two kinds of natures, the one utterly selfish, which has in it no divine sparks that may be kindled into better things. The owner of such a nature may live all his days a highly respectable life, but never will be capable of generosity, heroism, or even true appreciation of them. The other nature may have gone as far astray as the prodigal's, and yet have in it the unextinguished spark, which may be blown into a flame.

Scene 4.

We see Rosalind in trouble. Orlando, detained by some duty in the Duke's service, has failed to keep his appointment. Any one who has had experience in consoling lover-girl or lover-man under such circumstances will appreciate this scene, with its utter unreasonableness on the part of the one cousin, and the patience of the other, driven to repeat and re-repeat her arguments, together with the craving of the one bereft to have the confidant praise and not blame the object beloved. Rosalind seems to have had small personal knowledge of her banished father, and shows no great anxiety to join his court. Probably this free, untrammelled green-wood life was delightful to her; possibly she had misgivings as to his reception of Celia.

Rosalind. Never talk to me; I will weep.

Celia. Do, I prithee; but yet have the grace to consider that tears do not become a man.

Rosalind. But have I not cause to weep?

Celia. As good cause as one would desire; therefore weep.

Rosalind. His very hair is of the dissembling color.

Celia. Something browner than Judas's: marry, his kisses are Judas's own children.

Rosalind. I' faith, his hair is of a good color.

Celia. An excellent color; your chestnut was ever the only color.

Rosalind. And his kissing is as full of sanctity as the touch of holy bread.

Celia. He hath bought a pair of cast lips of Diana: a nun of winter's sisterhood kisses not more religiously; the very ice of chastity is in them.

Rosalind. But why did he swear he would come this morning, and comes not?

Celia. Nay, certainly, there is no truth in him.

Rosalind. Do you think so?

Celia. Yes; I think he is not a pick-purse, nor a horse-stealer;

but for his verity in love, I do think him as concave as a covered goblet, or a worm-eaten nut.

Rosalind. Not true in love ?

Celia. Yes, when he is in ; but I think he is not in.

Rosalind. You have heard him swear downright he was.

Celia. *Was* is not *is;* besides, the oath of a lover is no stronger than the word of a tapster ; they are both the confirmers of false reckonings. He attends here in the forest on the Duke, your father.

Rosalind. I met the Duke yesterday, and had much question with him. He asked me of what parentage I was ; I told him of as good as he ; so he laughed, and let me go. But what talk we of fathers, when there is such a man as Orlando ?

Celia. O, that 's a brave man ! he writes brave verses, speaks brave words, swears brave oaths, and breaks them bravely, quite traverse, across the heart of his lover ; as a puny tilter, that spurs his horse but on one side, and breaks his staff like a noble. But all 's brave that youth mounts, and folly guides.

Scene 5.

This fifth scene is part of the pastoral which is combined with the main story, and which, though it has been esteemed as " a gem inserted in a golden setting," and though Phebe has some of the loveliest speeches in the drama, we have too little space to be able to pause upon. Phebe is a black-haired village beauty, immensely conscious of her own attractions. Silvius courts her with a sort of dog-like, servile love, that is the very thing that would set such a girl against him as a lover. In truth, Phebe flouts him, disdains him, tramples on him ; and her heartless behavior provokes generous Rosalind, who, overhearing her ill-treating the patient man, breaks in with remonstrances, and tells her, —

> Know yourself ; down on your knees,
> And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love.

Phebe, utterly astonished when this handsome youth assures her she is no beauty, and that she is hardly worthy

of the love of Silvius, falls at once in love with him who so reproves her. All love in this play is love at first sight, except that of Silvius. Maybe, in love, instinct is as safe a guide as modern methods. Phebe quotes a line which may be, as she says, an old proverb, but which is found in Marlowe:

> "Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

As soon as Rosalind (the scornful Ganymede) has disappeared, Phebe *apparently* softens to Silvius, who had previously told her that when she knew the power of fancy herself she would grow more pitiful to him. She is a deceitful minx, however, for her first object is to ascertain where the youth who has been speaking to her lives. This is her description of him: —

> It is a pretty youth, — not very pretty;
> But, sure, he 's proud, — and yet his pride becomes him;
> He 'll make a proper man. The best thing in him
> Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
> Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.
> He is not tall, — yet for his years he 's tall;
> His leg is but so so, — and yet 't is well;
> There was a pretty redness in his lip;
> A little riper and more lusty red
> Than that mixed in his cheek; 't was just the difference
> Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.
> There be some women, Silvius, had they marked him
> In parcels as I did, would have gone near
> To fall in love with him; but, for my part,
> I love him not nor hate him not; and yet
> I have more cause to hate him than to love him.
> For what had he to do to chide at me?

Then suddenly she conceives the idea of using her power over Silvius to make him carry to her new love a love-letter.

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

In the first scene of this act, Jaques is trying to make acquaintance with Rosalind, who calls him to account for his profession of melancholy. As usual, Jaques proceeds to classify that quality, though somewhat puzzled to describe his own despondency. Rosalind, who is uneasy about Orlando, is herself in a melancholy mood. As they talk, Orlando comes up to them, and a scene ensues, in which, says Lady Martin, "Rosalind puts forth all her little womanly waywardnesses, playing like summer lightning on her own throbbing tenderness of heart, and never in her gayest sallies or her happiest moods (for she is radiantly happy, now that Orlando has come back to her) losing one grain of our respect." As Jaques, who has professed to be a traveller, departs, how admirable is the sarcasm she flings after him:

Rosalind. Farewell, monsieur traveller. Look, you lisp, and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity; and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola. Why, how now, Orlando! Where have you been all this while? You a lover? An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

Orlando. My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

Rosalind. Break an hour's promise in love? He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts, and break but a part of a thousandth part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him, that Cupid hath clapped him o' the shoulder, but I warrant him heart-whole.

Orlando. Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

Rosalind. Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight; I had as lief be wooed of a snail.

Orlando. Of a snail?

Rosalind. Ay, of a snail; for though he comes slowly, he carries his house on his head; a better jointure, I think, than you can make a woman. But come, woo me, woo me; for now I am in a holiday

humor, and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now an I were your very, very Rosalind?

Orlando. I would kiss before I spoke.

Rosalind. How if the kiss be denied? But am I not your Rosalind?

Orlando. I take some joy to say you are, because I would be talking of her.

Rosalind. Well, in her person I say, I will not have you.

Orlando. Then in mine own person I die.

Rosalind. No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, *videlicet*, in a love-cause. Troilus had his brains clashed out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year though Hero had turned nun, had it not been for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went forth but to wash him in the Hellespont, and being taken with the cramp was drowned; and the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was — Hero, of Sestos! But these are all lies; men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them,— but not for love.

Orlando. I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind, for I protest her frown would kill me.

Rosalind. By this hand it will not kill a fly. But come, now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition; and ask me what you will, I will grant it.

The courtship goes on till they have made a genuine troth-plight, with Celia as the witness. Rosalind, I think, is a little apprehensive that her father may put obstacles in the way of her happiness, and is not unwilling to secure herself by such a troth-plight as, in "The Winter's Tale," passed between Florizel and Perdita. And then, when Orlando must leave her, how prettily, while pretending to be Rosalind, she pleads for his sweet company; and begs him soon to come back again.

Orlando. For these two hours, Rosalind, I will leave thee.

Rosalind. Alas, dear love, I cannot lack thee two hours.

Orlando. I must attend the Duke at dinner; by two o' clock I will be with thee again.

Rosalind. Ay, go your ways, go your ways. I knew what you would prove; my friends told me as much, and I thought no less. That flattering tongue of yours won me. 'T is but one cast away; and so, come death. Two o' clock is your hour?

Orlando. Ay, sweet Rosalind.

Rosalind. By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous, if you break one jot of your promise, or come one minute behind your hour, I will think you the most pathetical break-promise, and the most hollow lover, and the most unworthy of her you call Rosalind, that may be chosen out of the gross band of the unfaithful. Therefore beware my censure, and keep your promise.

Then, Orlando being gone, Celia, pouting, reproves her cousin for slandering her own sex in her love-prate, and Rosalind (no doubt dancing round her as she speaks) answers: —

O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded; my affection hath an unknown bottom, like the bay of Portugal. That blind rascally boy, that son of Venus, that abuses every one's eyes because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I am in love. I 'll tell thee, Aliena, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando. I 'll go find a shadow, and sigh till he come.

Scene 2.

This scene contains little more than a hunting-song, introduced probably to bring out the voice of the best male singer in Shakspeare's dramatic company.

Scene 3.

We now see Rosalind expectant of Orlando. As she awaits him (for the two hours of his absence are at an end) Silvius comes up to her with Phebe's love-letter. Rosalind

is so indignant at the girl's treachery that she hands over the letter to Silvius (whom she calls a "tame snake"), to deal with the writer on account of it as he will, giving him at the same time the assurance that he (Ganymede) will never have Phebe, except Silvius himself shall entreat that he shall give her his love.

Here enters Oliver, asking if they know where stands "a sheepcote fenced with olive-trees?" Observe that Oliver is in possession of that secret which has but just revealed itself to Orlando. He addresses both the girls as "fair ones," notwithstanding Ganymede's doublet and hose. Celia replies: —

> West of this place, down in the neighboring bottom,
> The rank of osiers by the murmuring stream,
> Left on your right hand, brings you to the place.
> But at this hour the house doth keep itself;
> There 's none within.
>
> *Oliver.* If that an eye may profit by a tongue,
> Then I should know you by description;
> Such garments, and such years: "The boy is fair,
> Of female favor, and bestows himself
> Like a ripe sister; but the woman low,
> And browner than her brother." Are not you
> The owner of the house I did inquire for?
>
> *Celia.* It is no boast, being asked, to say, we are.
>
> *Oliver.* Orlando doth commend him to you both;
> And to that youth he calls his Rosalind,
> He sends this bloody napkin; are you he?
>
> *Rosalind.* I am; what must we understand by this?
>
> *Oliver.* Some of my shame; if you will know of me
> What man I am, and how, and why, and where
> This handkerchief was stained.
>
> *Celia.* I pray you, tell it.
>
> *Oliver.* When last the young Orlando parted from you,
> He left a promise to return again
> Within an hour; and pacing through the forest,

Chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy,
Lo, what befel! he threw his eye aside,
And, mark, what object did present itself!
Under an oak, whose boughs were mossed with age,
And high top bald with dry antiquity,
A wretched, ragged man, o'ergrown with hair,
Lay sleeping on his back: about his neck
A green and gilded snake had wreathed itself,
Who with her head, nimble in threats, approached
The opening of his mouth; but suddenly
Seeing Orlando, it unlinked itself,
And with indented glides did slip away
Into a bush; under which bush's shade
A lioness, with udders all drawn dry,
Lay crouching, head on ground, with cat-like watch
When that the sleeping man should stir, — for 't is
The royal disposition of that beast
To prey on nothing that doth seem as dead.
This seen, Orlando did approach the man,
And found it was his brother, his elder brother.

Celia. O, I have heard him speak of that same brother;
And he did render him the most unnatural
That lived 'mongst men.

Oliver. And well he might do so;
For well I know he was unnatural.

Rosalind. But, to Orlando, — did he leave him there,
Food to the sucked and hungry lioness?

Oliver. Twice did he turn his back, and purposed so.
But kindness, nobler ever than revenge,
And nature, stronger than his just occasion,
Made him give battle to the lioness,
Who quickly fell before him; in which hurtling,
From miserable slumber I awaked.

Celia. Are you his brother?

Rosalind. Was it you he rescued?

Celia. Was 't you that did so oft contrive to kill him?

Oliver. 'T was I; but 't is not I. I do not shame
To tell you what I was, since my conversion
So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am.

Rosalind. But, for the bloody napkin? —

Oliver. By and by.
When from the first to last, betwixt us two,
Tears our recountments had most kindly bathed,
As, how I came into that desert place, —
In brief, he led me to the gentle Duke,
Who gave me fresh array, and entertainment,
Committing me unto my brother's love ;
Who led me instantly unto his cave,
There stripped himself, and here upon his arm
The lioness had torn some flesh away,
Which all this while had bled ; and now he fainted,
And cried, in fainting, upon Rosalind.
Brief, I recovered him ; bound up his wound ;
And after some small space, being strong at heart,
He sent me hither, stranger as I am,
To tell this story, that you might excuse
His broken promise, and to give this napkin,
Dyed in his blood, unto the shepherd youth
That he in sport doth call his Rosalind.

The last part of this scene, where Rosalind, unable to bear more, faints, then makes believe she had but counterfeited, — the solicitude of Celia, the guesses of Oliver, Celia's blunder when she addresses Ganymede as "cousin," and Rosalind's want of power to collect her scattered senses are all told to us in a few words.

Celia. Why, how now, Ganymede ? sweet Ganymede !
[*Rosalind faints.*
Oliver. Many will swoon when they do look on blood.
Celia. There 's more in it. Cousin ! Ganymede !
Oliver. Look ! he recovers.
Rosalind. I would I were at home.
Celia. We 'll lead you thither.
I pray you, will you take him by the arm ?
Oliver. Be of good cheer, youth. You a man !
You lack a man's heart.
Rosalind. I do so ; I confess it. Ah, sir, a body would think this

was well counterfeited; I pray you tell your brother how well I counterfeited. Heigh ho!

Oliver. This was not counterfeit. There is too great testimony in your complexion that it was a passion of earnest.

Rosalind. Counterfeit, I assure you.

Oliver. Well, then, take a good heart and counterfeit to be a man.

Rosalind. So I do, but i' faith, I should have been a woman by right.

Celia. Come, you look paler and paler; pray you draw homewards. Good sir, go with us.

Oliver. That will I, for I must bear answer back how you excuse my brother, Rosalind.

Rosalind. I shall devise something; but I pray you commend my counterfeiting to him. Will you go?

Act V. *Scene* 1.

Here we see Audrey, not over-pleased that "the gentleman" has stopped her irregular marriage. This natural mistrust of "the gentleman" seems to pervade all peasants, unless we except the all-confiding race of Southern negroes. Touchstone grows more in love with Audrey as soon as he suspects that he may have a rival. The rustic, stolid William is one of Shakspeare's perfect minor characters. Lady Martin says that when she acted Rosalind it was an especial pleasure to her to see one particular actor do that part. We can imagine Touchstone as he thunders down on the poor fellow, and frightens him off the scene; and Audrey is also scared out of her wits.

Touchstone. We shall find a time, Audrey; patience, gentle Audrey.

Audrey. 'Faith, the priest was good enough, for all the old gentleman's saying.

Touchstone. A most wicked Sir Oliver, Audrey, a most vile Martext. But, Audrey, there is a youth here in the forest lays claim to you.

Audrey. Ay, I know who 't is; he hath no interest in me in the world: here comes the man you mean.

[*Enter William.*

Touchstone. It is meat and drink to me to see a clown. By my troth, we that have good wits have much to answer for: we shall be flouting; we cannot hold.

William. Good even, Audrey.

Audrey. God ye good even, William.

William. And good even to you, sir.

Touchstone. Good even, gentle friend. Cover thy head, cover thy head; nay, prithee, be covered. How old are you, friend?

William. Five and twenty, sir.

Touchstone. A ripe age; is thy name William?

William. William, sir.

Touchstone. A fair name. Wast born i' the forest here?

William. Ay, sir, I thank God.

Touchstone. "Thank God;" a good answer. Art rich?

William. 'Faith, sir, so, so.

Touchstone. "So, so" is good, very good, very excellent good; and yet it is not, it is but so so. Art thou wise?

William. Ay, sir, I have a pretty wit.

Touchstone. Why, thou say'st well. I do now remember a saying, "The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool." The heathen philosopher, when he had a desire to eat a grape, would open his lips when he put it into his mouth; meaning thereby, that grapes were made to eat, and lips to open. You do love this maid?

William. I do, sir.

Touchstone. Give me your hand. Are you learnèd?

William. No, sir.

Touchstone. Then learn this of me: To have is to have; for it is a figure in rhetoric, that drink, being poured out of a cup into a glass, by filling the one doth empty the other. For all your writers do confess that *ipse* is he; now you are not *ipse*, for I am he.

William. Which he, sir?

Touchstone. He, sir, that must marry this woman; therefore, you clown, abandon — which in the vulgar is leave — the society — which in the boorish is company — of this female — which in the common is woman; which together is, Abandon the society of this female. Or, clown, thou perishest, or to thy better understanding, diest; to wit,

I 'll kill thee, make thee away; translate thy life into death, thy liberty into bondage. I will deal in poison with thee, in bastinado, or in steel. I will bandy with thee in faction; I will o'errun thee with policy, I will kill thee an hundred and fifty ways. Therefore, tremble and depart!

Audrey. Do, good William.

William. God rest you merry, sir.

Scene 2.

Oliver confesses his love for Celia, at first sight, to Orlando. Here the brothers have changed places; Oliver has become penniless, and Orlando, being high in the favor of the legitimate Duke, is now in the position of an elder brother.

Orlando. Is 't possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her? that, but seeing, you should love her? and, loving, woo? and, wooing, she should grant? and will you persever to enjoy her?

Oliver. Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of her, the small acquaintance, my sudden wooing, nor her sudden consenting; but say with me, I love Aliena; say with her, that she loves me; consent with both, that we may enjoy each other. It shall be to your good; for my father's house, and all the revenue that was old Sir Rowland's, will I estate upon you, and here live and die a shepherd.

Here Rosalind breaks in upon the brothers, and I think Oliver hints to her that he has guessed her sex; but she stops his mouth by alluding to his own wooing.

Rosalind [*to Oliver*]. God save you, brother.

Oliver. And you, fair sister.

Rosalind. O! my dear Orlando, how it grieves me to see thee wear thy heart in a scarf.

Orlando. It is my arm.

Rosalind. I thought thy heart had been wounded with the claws of a lion.

Orlando. Wounded it is, but with the eyes of a lady.

Rosalind. Did your brother tell you how I counterfeited to swoon when he showed me your handkerchief?

Orlando. Ay, and greater wonders than that.

Rosalind. O, I know where you are. Nay, 'tis true there was never anything so sudden, but Cæsar's thrasonical brag of "I came, saw, and overcame." For your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason than they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage.

Orlando. They shall be married to-morrow, and I will bid the Duke to the nuptial. But O! how bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes! by so much the more shall I to-morrow be at the height of heart-heaviness, by how much I shall think my brother happy in having what he wishes for.

Rosalind. Why, then, to-morrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?

Orlando. I can live no longer by thinking.

Rosalind. I will weary you then no longer with idle talking; for if you will be married to-morrow you shall, and to Rosalind if you will. I am a magician.

Then come in Silvius and Phebe; and Rosalind, in her happiness, plays *dea ex machina*, and promises marriage and satisfaction all round.

Scene 3.

In the next short scene we see Touchstone promising Audrey that the morrow shall be their wedding-day; and two pages of the Duke passing by at the moment sing them a song. "Shall we clap into 't roundly," asks one of them, "without hawking, or spitting, or saying we are hoarse?"

Like all Shakspeare's songs, it is music without music, though a misprint in the refrain long deprived it of some of its melody.

I.

It was a lover, and his lass;
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green cornfield did pass
In the spring time, the pretty ring time, O!

When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring, O!

II.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, the pretty ring time, O!
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring, O!

III.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that a life was but a flower
In the spring time, the pretty ring time, O!
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring, O!

IV.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino;
For love is crownèd with the prime,
In the spring time, the pretty ring time, O!
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring, O!

Scene 4.

The Duke and his court assemble for the marriage of Oliver. Rosalind, having ascertained (we know not how) that if the Duke's daughter be produced she shall be given in marriage to Orlando (I think that Jaques, who has suspected her secret all along, may have revealed it to his master), goes aside to resume her female raiment. While this is doing we are diverted by a colloquy, in the Duke's presence, between Jaques and Touchstone. The book alluded to is "a very ridiculous treatise, by one Vicentio Saviola, entitled 'Of Humourous and Honourable Quarrels;' printed in English in 1594."

As Audrey and Touchstone come forward in their bridal finery, Jaques remarks on them as a pair of queer beasts out of the ark; then recognizing Touchstone as the fool that he had met in the forest, he greets him ironically as a gentleman and courtier.

Touchstone. If any man doubt that, let him put me to my purgation. I have trod a measure; I have flattered a lady; I have been politic with my friend, smooth with mine enemy; I have undone three tailors; I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one.

Jaques. And how was that taken up?

Touchstone. 'Faith, we met, and found the quarrel was upon the seventh cause.

Jaques. How seventh cause? — Good my lord, like this fellow.

Duke. I like him very well.

Touchstone. God 'ild you, sir; I desire you of the like. I press in here, sir, amongst the rest of the country copulatives, to swear, and to forswear; according as marriage binds, and blood breaks. A poor virgin, sir, an ill-favored thing, sir, but mine own; a poor humor of mine, sir, to take that that no man else will. Rich honesty dwells like a miser, sir, in a poor house; as your pearl, in your foul oyster.

Duke. By my faith, he is very swift and sententious.

Touchstone. According to the fool's bolt, sir, and such dulcet diseases.

Jaques. But, for the seventh cause, — how did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause?

Touchstone. Upon a lie seven times removed, — bear your body more seeming, Audrey, — as thus, sir. I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard; he sent me word if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was. This is called the *retort courteous.* If I sent him word again it was not well cut, he would send me word he cut it to please himself. This is called the *quip modest.* If again, it was not well cut, he disabled my judgment. This is called the *reply churlish.* If again, it was not well cut, he would answer, I spake not true. This is called the *reproof valiant.* If again, it was not well cut, he would say, I lie. This is called the *countercheck quarrelsome:* and so to the *lie circumstantial,* and the *lie direct.*

Jaques. And how oft did you say his beard was not well cut?

Touchstone. I durst go no further than the *lie circumstantial*, nor he durst not give me the *lie direct;* and so we measured swords and parted.

Jaques. Can you nominate in order now the degrees of the lie?

Touchstone. O sir, we quarrel in print, by the book, as you have books for good manners; I will name you the degrees. The first, the retort courteous; the second, the quip modest; the third, the reply churlish; the fourth, the reproof valiant; the fifth, the countercheck quarrelsome; the sixth, the lie with circumstance; the seventh, the lie direct. All these you may avoid, but the lie direct; and you may avoid that too, with an *if.* I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel; but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an *if*, as, *if you said so, then I said so;* and they shook hands, and swore brothers. Your *if* is the only peacemaker; much virtue in *if.*

Jaques. Is not this a rare fellow, my lord? he 's as good at anything, and yet a fool.

Duke. He uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that, he shoots his wit.

Then Rosalind and Celia, attended, as in a masque, by a representative of Hymen, come into the presence, and the four couples stand up to be married. Before the ceremony can be performed, however, Jaques de Bois, that brother who stood between Oliver and Orlando, who had been studying in some "school" (that is, college) of law or medicine, appears, saying that Duke Frederick has repented; has restored the dukedom to his brother, the banished Duke, and has gone into a hermitage. At this the other Jaques, who in spite of his claims to melancholy has been really happy in the greenwood, announces his determination to follow the fallen fortunes of Celia's father. In this "he is conscious he is playing what will be considered a disinterested part and feels himself exalted in his own eyes." "He departs from the stage," says Maginn, "with the grace and easy elegance of a gentleman in heart and manners. He joins his old antago-

nist, the late usurping Duke, in his fallen fortunes; he had spurned him in his prosperity. His restored friend he bequeaths to his former honor, deserved by his patience and his virtue; he compliments Oliver on his restoration to land and love and great allies; wishes Silvius joy of his long-sought and well-earned marriage; cracks upon Touchstone one of those good-humored jokes to which men of the world on the eve of marriage must laughingly submit, — and makes his bow."

Victor Hugo's idea of the moral of this play is that it illustrates the fable of Antæus, — that contact with pure nature — Mother Earth — in short, the greenwood — renovates and purifies human nature. Thus he sees Jaques, Touchstone, and above all, Oliver made better by their sojourn in Arden; and to this he attributes the total revolution that apparently takes place in Oliver.

TWELFTH NIGHT;

OR,

WHAT YOU WILL.

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL.

THIS Play, under the name of "What You Will," was first performed on Candlemas Day (Ground Hog's Day, in Maryland, and the old Twelfth Night), — in other words, February 2, 1602. Its plot is taken from a trivial, indelicate, commonplace story, "Apollonius and Silla," in which Shakspeare found his central idea of the faithful love of a true woman capable of absolutely forgetting herself.

It is a play full of rollicking fun, as suited its performance on Twelfth Night. Hazlitt says, "It makes us laugh at the follies of mankind, not despise them, and still less bear any ill will to them. Shakspeare's comic genius resembles the bee rather in its power of extracting sweetness from weeds than in leaving a sting behind it."

The scene is laid in Illyria, where reigns a Duke, young, handsome, musical, tender-hearted, and well-nurtured, but one of those people who are capable of talking themselves into a state of feeling, — as Romeo talked himself into what we might call an *ungenuine* passion for Rosaline. These are the loves that prove curable. They pain or they rejoice those who entertain them, — while they last, — and almost all men and women have experienced them; but, as it takes two to make a quarrel, so I think it takes two to make a genuine affection; or at least it requires such intimate com-

munion with the object of the passion as Viola had with the Duke while his confidant and page.

This Duke, Orsino, had conceived a passion (or sentiment) of this nature for Olivia, a noble lady, very rich, and very beautiful, who had been left by her dying father to the guardianship of an only brother. He, dying soon after, left her, like Portia, mistress of herself and of her fortune. Her nearest kinsman, Sir Toby Belch, who ought to have been her protector, is a dissipated old uncle whom she suffers to live in her house; but the charge of that house is committed to Malvolio, a Puritan in character, a man of stern integrity, unbounded conceit, and narrow understanding, — the very prince of prigs.

Olivia, like Orsino, has a disposition that leads her to foster unnatural sentiment. Her brother being dead, she resolves to seclude herself from all society, nay, even from the free air of heaven, for seven years. We can feel that were the Duke to succeed in his suit to Olivia, their similarity in sentimentality would mar their married happiness. Each needs a bolder and more practical better half to supply what is lacking in himself or her.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

The Duke's reflections upon music, which open the play, as he sits among his lords in an apartment of his palace, are very pretty, though (to quote himself) they may be "high fantastical."

> If music be the food of love, play on,
> Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die.
> That strain again, — it had a dying fall;
> O! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,

That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing, and giving, odor. Enough; no more;
'T is not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou!
That notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as a sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soever,
But falls into abasement and low price,
Even in a minute! So full of shapes is fancy
That it alone is high fantastical.

Goethe has somewhere remarked that Shakspeare's metaphors contain always the presentation of a new idea. The Duke's speech is very full of them.

Scene 2.

This next scene introduces us to Viola, who, like Olivia, is grieving for a brother's loss. She and this brother have been wrecked at sea; she has been saved, while he drifted out of sight upon a spar. Finding herself in Illyria, her first thought is that she would like to seek shelter in the household of Countess Olivia. This, her friend the captain assures her, is impossible. Then at once, with her practical mind, she makes another plan, — she will enter the service of the Duke Orsino; but, as he is a bachelor, she will assume her twin brother's clothes and call herself Cæsario.

Never was any woman less manly than poor Viola. She has none of Rosalind's sense of fun in her disguise. *Her* "doublet and hose" are assumed in trembling and in sadness. She knows something of the Duke, she has heard that he delights in music, she thinks that she might please him. Left an orphan, she has the habit of deciding for herself; to her there seems but one alternative, — a safe and honorable shelter must be found either in the Duke's service, or in the

household of Olivia. We are saddened by a sense of her utter loneliness; but her determined perseverance, her mastery over her own wishes, her sweet tenderness, her womanly fears, invest her with especial interest. She is, what many another woman has been, weak in the flesh, but strong in spirit.

Scene 3.

The characters of this play are introduced to us in three disconnected scenes. First, we have Duke Orsino and his court; secondly, we have the bereaved, lonely, shipwrecked Viola; thirdly, we enter the palace of Olivia, where we find her disreputable uncle, Sir Toby Belch, conversing with her lively, under-bred waiting-woman, the roguish Maria. Maria is taking the drinking kinsman of her lady to task for his irregular habits; especially is she anxious to hear particulars of a foolish knight whom Sir Toby has brought to the house as a suitor to her mistress, — one Sir Andrew Ague-cheek. I think Maria has some notion that, though he is utterly unsuitable for Countess Olivia, she herself may capture the prize. Sir Toby is getting money out of Sir Andrew Ague-cheek, and at the same time much amusement. Sir Andrew is a "born fool," country-bred, greatly abashed by the court-life that he sees around him, and not at all disposed to be self-confident. He thinks that, maybe, eating too much beef has been hurtful to his brains. Sir Toby and Maria can wind him round their fingers, and when the play is acted it must be very funny to see him lumbering round the stage, capering in a galliard at the close of this scene.

Sir Toby. What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care 's an enemy to life.

Maria. By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier o' nights. Your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours.

Sir Toby. Why, let her except before excepted.

Maria. Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

Sir Toby. Confine? I 'll confine myself no finer than I am. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too. If they are not, let them hang themselves in their own straps.

Maria. That quaffing and drinking will undo you; I heard my lady talk of it yesterday, and of a foolish knight you brought in one night here to be her wooer.

Sir Toby. Who? Sir Andrew Ague-cheek?

Maria. Ay, he.

Sir Toby. He 's as tall a man as any in Illyria.

Maria. What 's that to the purpose?

Sir Toby. Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

Maria. Ay, but he 'll have but one year in all these ducats. He 's a very fool, and a prodigal.

Sir Toby. Fie! that you 'll say so; he plays o' the *viol de gamba*, and speaks three or four languages, word for word, without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

Maria. . . They add, moreover, he 's drunk nightly in your company.

Sir Toby. With drinking healths to my niece; I 'll drink to her as long as there 's a passage in my throat or drink in Illyria. . . . What, wench? *Castiliano vulgo;* for here comes Sir Andrew Ague-cheek.

Sir Andrew. Sir Toby Belch! How now, Sir Toby Belch?

Sir Toby. Sweet Sir Andrew!

Sir Andrew [*to Maria*]. Bless you, fair shrew.

Maria. And you too, sir.

Sir Toby. Accost! Sir Andrew, accost!

Sir Andrew. What 's that?

Sir Toby. My niece's chambermaid.

Sir Andrew. Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

Maria. My name is Mary, sir.

Sir Andrew. Good Mistress Mary Accost —

Sir Toby. You mistake, knight; accost is, front her, board her, woo her, assail her.

Sir Andrew. By my troth, I would not undertake that in this company. Is that the meaning of accost?

Maria. Fare you well, gentlemen.

She stays, however, for a little more coarse badinage, and then departs, leaving Sir Toby laughing. He cries out: —

O knight, thou lackest a cup of canary; when did I see thee so put down?

Sir Andrew. Never in your life, I think, unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has. But I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit.

Sir Toby. No question.

Sir Andrew. An I thought *that* I 'd forswear it. I 'll ride home to-morrow, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby. *Pourquoi*, my dear knight.

Sir Andrew. What is *pourquoi?* do or not do? I would I had bestowed that time on the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. O, had I but followed the arts!

Then, more and more despondent, he continues: —

'Faith, I 'll home to-morrow, Sir Toby; your niece will not be seen, or, if she be, it 's four to one she'll none of me. The Count himself, here hard by, woos her.

Sir Toby. She 'll none o' the Count. She 'll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit. I have heard her swear it. Tut, there 's life in 't, man!

Sir Andrew. I 'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' the strangest mind in the world; I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether.

Sir Toby. Art thou good at these kickshaws, knight?

Sir Andrew. As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters; and yet I will not compare with an old man.

Sir Toby. What is thine excellence in a galliard, knight?

Sir Andrew. Faith, I can cut a caper.

Sir Toby. And I can eat the mutton to 't.

Sir Andrew. And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria. [*Dances.*

Sir Toby. Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before them? Are they like to take dust, like Mistress Moll's[1] picture? Why dost thou not go to church in a

[1] Moll Fith, a woman noted for mad pranks in London in Shakspeare's time.

galliard, and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig. What dost thou mean? Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think by the excellent constitution of thy leg it was formed under the star of a galliard.

Sir Andrew. Ay, it is strong, and it does indifferent work in a flame-colored stock. Shall we set about some revels?

Sir Toby. What shall we do else? were we not born under Taurus?

Sir Andrew. Taurus?[1] That 's sides and hearts.

Sir Toby. No, sir; it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper. Ha! higher. Ha, ha! — excellent!

[*Sir Andrew goes off dancing.*]

The author in the "Monthly Packet" says of Sir Toby: "He is no fool when his brains are not muddled by drinking. When he has control of his intellect it is exclusively directed towards advancing his own interests, and chiefly as regards his purse; for he has evidently run through all that belonged to him, and is living partly by his wits, partly on such hospitality as Olivia is inclined to show him. He is well adapted to be a pertinacious hanger-on in a rich household, for he possesses all the necessary effrontery for making the most of his advantages without giving an equivalent. It never enters into Sir Toby's wildest dreams that he could be expected to be of any use to his orphan niece, left unprotected; his only idea is to make as great convenience as he can of her house, till the indignant girl orders him out of it."

Yet who can be angry with Sir Toby very long? He is nearly as hard to disconcert as the immortal Sir John Falstaff himself. As to Sir Andrew Ague-cheek, Charles Lamb, in one of his papers, tells us of an actor who looked the part to

[1] He alludes to the human figure in Almanacs, adapted to the signs of the Zodiac.

perfection, with "his broad moony face, and the occasional gleam of an idea stealing over it, and going out for want of fuel."

"Sir Andrew is distinguished among Shakspeare's non-professional fools by sheer dulness of brain. If now and then a faint notion works into what he is pleased to call his 'wits,' it is easily dispossessed by Sir Toby, in whose relentless hands the poor knight is pitiably helpless. He is one of those men who need to be vigorously guarded, from the cradle to the grave, if they are not to be continually robbed; and even then they will probably find some way to ruin themselves through their folly, especially if they, like Sir Andrew, take to being drunk every night."

Scene 4.

In this fourth scene we find Viola, as the page Cæsario, admitted into the closest intimacy with Duke Orsino; already the confidant of his love affair, and alas! already herself in love with him. That she appears more like a woman than a boy, the Duke tells us. Her love is hopeless from the first. That — and everything that belongs to her true self — must be sternly, carefully hidden away.

Scene 5.

In Olivia's household, where she lives as lonely as poor Viola, there reigns a good deal of loose management, and would reign more, but for Malvolio. We see Maria exchanging banter with the fool of the establishment, who rallies her on her standing flirtation with Sir Toby. Olivia's seclusion has made Maria of undue importance in the household, and she takes upon herself the airs of a mistress. Clever, unscru-

pulous, self-seeking, and pleasure-loving, she finds Olivia's house a dull abode, "and catches at anything which promises diversion." Olivia is in no humor to enjoy her fool's quips and quiddities, but the fool stands his ground, and presently begins to awaken her interest. He proves to her that to mourn that her brother is in heaven marks *her* for a fool. Malvolio has evidently been making complaints of the fool to his mistress; for Olivia turns to him with,—

What think you of this fool, Malvolio? doth he not mend?

Malvolio. Yes, and shall do till the pangs of death shake him. Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool.

Fool. God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn I am no fox; but he will not pass his word for two-pence that you are no fool.

Olivia. How say you to that, Malvolio?

Malvolio. I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he is out of his guard already. Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him he is gagged. I protest I take these wise men that crow so at these set kind of fools for no better than the fool's zanies.

Olivia. Oh! you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-bullets. There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail, nor no railing in an honest, discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove.

Fool. Now Mercury indue thee with leasing, for thou speakest well of fools!

Feste, the fool, is one of the brightest specimens of his class drawn for us by Shakspeare. A member of Olivia's somewhat disorderly household, he passes his time wandering backwards and forwards between her palace and the court, picking up all possible items of news and gossip, and turning them, as it were, to account in his profession. As

Olivia is disputing with her fool, and administering a little good counsel to Malvolio, who holds the fool in abhorrence, news is brought to her that a young gentleman desires to speak with her. Hearing that Sir Toby, whom she knows to be probably intoxicated, is parleying with the gentleman, she sends Malvolio to say "engaged" or "not at home," if the young man comes from Duke Orsino.

Malvolio having had no success in dismissing the Duke's messenger, so reports to Olivia, who grows curious to see and hear the ambassador. We must bear in mind the dulness, the loneliness, and the worry of the life led by Olivia. Her mind has recovered from the first shock of her brother's death; she is unconsciously craving for new interests, and is prepared to welcome a new affection; but the Duke's suit is an annoyance and a weariness to her. Viola, on the contrary, who has been listening for a week past to the Duke's outpourings of confidence, and has been led by pity within the bounds of love, comes in with her heart full of suppressed suffering. She is one of those women in whom the maternal — that is, the protecting — instinct predominates. Her love would lead her to sacrifice herself, could she but give her Duke his heart's desire. She has to stand by, and see all she would most desire for herself lavished upon one indifferent to it. Nor is the Duke unconscious of the charms of Viola. Regarding her as a boy, he is attracted by her feminine ways, her sympathy, her solicitude for himself. He makes a pet of her while employing her in matters that he deems of the most vital importance, relying with perfect confidence on her devotion and ability.

Olivia [*to Malvolio*]. What kind of man is he?
Malvolio. Why, of man kind.

Olivia. What manner of man?

Malvolio. Of very ill manner; he 'll speak with you, will you or no.

Olivia. Of what personage and years is he?

Malvolio. Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before it is a peascod, or a codling that is almost an apple; 't is with him e'en standing water between boy and man; he is very well-favored, and he speaks very shrewishly; one would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him.

Olivia. Let him approach; call in my gentlewoman.
Give me my veil; come, throw it o'er my face.
We 'll once more hear Orsino's embassy. [*Enter Viola.*

Viola. The honorable lady of the house, which is she?

Olivia. Speak to me; I shall answer for her; your will?

Viola. Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty, — I pray you tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her. I would be loath to cast away my speech, for besides that it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn. I am very sensitive, even to the least sinister usage.

Olivia. Whence came you, sir?

Viola. I can say little more than I have studied, and that question 's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.

Olivia. Are you a comedian?

Viola. No, my profound heart; and yet I swear I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?

Olivia. If I do not usurp myself, I am.

Viola. Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve.

Olivia declines to receive the poetical compliment prepared for her; and, wishing to abash the boy, says: — "I heard you were saucy at my gates, and allowed your approach rather to wonder at you than to hear you."

Maria, who does not like the page's evident conviction that she is the waiting-maid, and the other Countess Olivia, breaks in with, "Will you hoist sail, sir? there lies your way."

Viola, who is just fresh from a sea-voyage, answers her back in nautical terms, and repays her insolence by addressing her as "good swabber," — the swabber's office being to act as housemaid to the ship. Then Viola proceeds to request from Olivia a private interview, and the discomfited Maria is sent away.

Viola's first request is that she may see the face of Olivia. When Olivia has unveiled she exclaims: —

'T is beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.
Lady, you are the cruelest she alive
If you will lead these graces to the grave,
And leave the world no copy.

Olivia. O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty. It shall be inventoried, — every particle and utensil labelled to my will: as, item, two lips, indifferent red; item, two gray eyes with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth; were you sent hither to praise me?

Viola. I see what you are; you are too proud.
But, if you were the devil, you are fair.
My lord and master loves you. O! such love
Could but be recompensed, though you were crowned
The nonpareil of beauty.

Olivia. How does he love me?

Viola. With adorations, and with fertile tears,
With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

Olivia. Your lord does know my mind, I cannot love him;
Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth,
In voices well divulged, free, learned, valiant.
And in dimension and the shape of nature
A gracious person; but yet I cannot love him.
He might have took his answer long ago.

Viola. If *I* did love you in my master's flame,
With such a suffering, such a deadly life,
In your denial I would find no sense;
I would not understand it.

Olivia. Why, what would you?
Viola. Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
And call upon my soul within the house;
Write loyal cantons of contemned love,
And sing them loud e'en in the dead of night;
Holla your name to the reverberate hills,
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out, Olivia! O! you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth
But you should pity me.
Olivia. *You* might do much.
What is your parentage?
Viola. Above my fortunes, yet my state is well;
I am a gentleman.
Olivia. Get you to your lord.
I cannot love him; let him send no more, —
Unless perchance *you* come to me again
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.
I thank you for your pains; spend this for me.
Viola. I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse.
My master, not myself, lacks recompense.
Love make *his* heart of flint that *you* shall love!
And let your fervor, like my master's, be
Placed in contempt. Farewell, fair cruelty. [*Exit.*
Olivia. What is your parentage?
"Above my fortunes, yet my state is well;
I am a gentleman." I 'll be sworn thou art.
Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit
Do give thee five-fold blazon. Not too fast! — soft, soft,
Unless the master were the man. How now?
Even so quickly may one catch the plague?
Methinks I feel this youth's perfections,
With an invisible and subtle stealth,
To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.
What, ho, Malvolio! —
Malvolio. Here, madam, at your service.
Olivia. Run after that same peevish messenger,
The County's man. He left this ring behind him,
Would I or not; tell him I 'll none of it;
Desire him not to flatter with his lord,

> Nor hold him up with hopes; I am not for *him*.
> If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,
> I 'll give him reasons for 't. Hie thee, Malvolio.

In this scene you will observe that Viola begins by a little over-acting her part of the saucy page. She comprehends in what the Duke has erred in his courtship; she knows he should have wooed in person, put his fervor into action, and have carried his point by storm. But it is Orsino's nature to be the too patient, somewhat philandering admirer. Some of us must have known how hard it is to spur up one who hesitates and fears, to be an active lover. Viola, who no doubt, in her page's dress, strongly resembles her brother Sebastian, — minus the manly boldness of his bearing, — charms Olivia from the very first, interests and stimulates her. Her dull and lonely life had not been broken into by anything so interesting for many months. The mystery that hangs about the youth, his unfeigned admiration of her beauty (which Viola, with a pang, is generous enough to acknowledge and to praise), his assurance that his birth makes him her equal, his refusal of her purse, which confirms this impression, — all, combined with the ripeness of her own heart for love, throw Olivia off her balance. "Lord of herself," like Portia, she is not, though hitherto a gracious, sweet, and somewhat ostentatiously reserved great lady. No doubt Viola had been preaching personal persistency to her Duke; and she gives Olivia the benefit of her reflections when she says that whereas Orsino loves with tears, and groans, and sighs, *she* would put *her* love into action, would take no denial, would sit at her lady's gate, would sing her love-songs in the dead of night, "holla her name to the reverberate hills, and make the very breezes cry, Olivia!"

Alas! she had to hide her love, poor girl, in tears and sighs, and plead before this insensible beauty the cause of one she fain would have for her own.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

The opening scene of this second act is on the sea-coast; the speakers are the sea-captain Antonio, who has picked Sebastian up at sea, — and that young gentleman. Like his sister, he has the happy gift of making every one believe in him and love him; he is bound to Orsino's court, and tells us, incidentally, that he and his sister were persons of the highest consideration in their own country; so that there was no misalliance in their subsequent marriages. Antonio offers to attach himself to Sebastian as his servant, but Sebastian, with words of tenderness and courtesy, declines the proposition. Antonio, indeed, had reasons for avoiding Orsino's dominions. To use the slang phrase of our police, he knew that he was "wanted" there, having at one time fought the galleys of Illyria, very probably as a freebooter, and been condemned to death for it.

Scene 2.

Here we have Malvolio, churlishly and roughly accosting Viola, and flinging at her Countess Olivia's ring. The truth that Olivia believes herself in love with *her* — the page — dawns upon Viola, as the prim steward leaves her; she does not scorn Olivia, as happy Rosalind scorned Phebe, but inasmuch as

> That woman could not be of nature's making
> Who, being kind, her misery made not kinder,

her own unhappy love leads her to pity her. She says, —

I left no ring with her; what means this lady?
Fortune forbid my outside have not charmed her!
She made good view of me; indeed, so much
That, sure, methought, her eyes had lost her tongue;
For she did speak in starts, distractedly.
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger.
None of my lord's ring? why, he sent her none.
I am the man. If it be so (as 't is),
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy is it for the proper-false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
Alas! our frailty is the cause, not we.
For, such as we are made of, such we be.
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love;
As I am woman, now alas the day!
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!
O time, thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me to untie.

This must be a very hard play to put upon the stage in modern times, owing to the repeated changes in scenery. In Shakspeare's Globe Theatre all they did was to set up a board inscribed *The Sea Coast. A Street. A room in Olivia's House*, and so on.

Scene 3.

Scene third is a room in Olivia's house, where Sir Toby, his victim Sir Andrew, and Feste the fool are carousing in company. Sir Andrew has just hinted that it may be time to go to bed. All that Sir Toby says, his science and

his Latin, is equally confusing to Sir Andrew, whom it pleases Sir Toby to make believe is a man of parts and learning.

Sir Toby. Approach, Sir Andrew; not to be a-bed after midnight is to be up betimes, and *diluculo surgere*, thou knowest —

Sir Andrew. Nay, by my troth, I know not; but I know that to be up late is to be up late.

Sir Toby. A false conclusion, — I hate it as an unfilled can; to be up after midnight, and to go to bed then is early; so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes. Do not our lives consist of four elements?

Sir Andrew. Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.

Sir Toby. Thou art a scholar! let us therefore eat and drink. Maria, I say! — a stoop of wine!

Sir Andrew. Here comes the fool, i' faith.

Fool. How now, my hearts? Did you never see the picture of we three?

Sir Toby. Come on; there's sixpence for you; let's have a song.

Sir Andrew. There's a testril of me, too. If one knight give away sixpence, so will I give another; go to, — a song.

Fool. Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life?

Sir Toby. A love-song! A love-song!

Sir Andrew. Ay, I care not for good life.

SONG.

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay thou here; thy true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low.
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 't is not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What 's to come is still unsure.
In delay there lies no plenty,

Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth 's a staff will not endure.

[*Enter Maria.*

Maria. What a caterwauling do you keep here! If my lady have not called up her steward, Malvolio, and bid him turn you out of doors, never trust me.

Sir Toby. My lady 's a Catanian, we are politicians, Malvolio 's a Peg-a-Ramsey, and "Three merry men are we!" Am I not consanguineous? am I not of her blood? Tilly-valley, lady! [*Sings.*] "There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady."

Fool. Beshrew me, the knight is in admirable fooling.

Sir Andrew. Ay, he does it well enough, if he be disposed, and so do I, too; he does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.

Sir Toby [*singing*]. "Oh, the twelfth day of December!"

Maria. For the love of God, peace!

Throughout the half-tipsy talk that goes on in this scene there are numerous allusions which have puzzled the commentators. A great many vain words, the utterances of Dry-as-dust, have been expended in unsatisfactory explanations. We may be content not to know what the tipsy knight means by a Catanian, — who was Pigrogromitus,[1] or what connection the Myrmidons had with bottled ale. As Sir Toby is trolling out his song,

"Oh, the twelfth day of December!"

(an allusion, I believe, to the day of the accession of Queen Elizabeth) Malvolio comes in, crying, —

My masters, are you mad? or what are you? have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time o' night? Do ye make an ale-house of my lady's house? Is there no respect of place, persons, or time, in you?

Sir Toby. We *did* keep *time*, sir, in our catches.

Malvolio. Sir Toby, I must be round with you; my lady bade me tell you that though she harbors you as her kinsman, she 's nothing

[1] Mentioned by Sir Andrew and Feste, in speeches omitted.

allied to your disorders; if you can separate yourself and your misdemeanors you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you farewell.

Sir Toby answers this threat of dismissal by singing a popular catch, with the clown.

Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone.

This first line frightens Malvolio, who had no expectation of being taken at his word.

His eyes do show his days are almost done.
But I will never die!
Shall I bid him go?
What an if you do?
Shall I bid him go, and spare not?
No! no! no! no! no! you dare not!

This last line, improvised for the occasion, is sung by the fool; then Sir Toby turns upon Malvolio with a reference to his late inquiry whether the rollicking trio had no respect of place, persons, or time.

Out o' time? sir, ye lie. Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

The allusion in this often-quoted passage is to an old-fashioned custom of eating ginger-cakes and drinking stronger ale than usual upon Saints' days. This custom was discountenanced by the Puritans, as "a rag of Popery."

The fool follows up the allusion to ginger-cakes with —

And ginger shall be hot in the mouth, too.

Then Sir Toby turns contemptuously to the steward, and bids him spend his time rubbing his gold chain (the badge of his office) bright with bread-crumbs, winding up with a call for more wine to Maria.

Malvolio. Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favor at anything more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule. She shall know of it, by this hand!

With these words he retires discomfited, and the three men and Maria, whom he has offended, remain to plot vengeance against him. Sir Andrew proposes to challenge him. Sir Toby claims the fun of carrying the challenge as a good joke, but woman's wit devises a better plan. Maria says: —

Sweet Sir Toby, be patient for to-night. Since that youth of the Count's was to-day with my lady she is much out of quiet. For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone with him. If I do not gull him into a nay-word, and make him a common recreation, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed. I know I can do it.

Sir Toby, who is startled by Maria's hint about Duke Orsino's page, cries: "Possess us! Possess us! Tell us something about him!" But Maria turns the subject by feigning to think he is speaking of Malvolio. "Marry, sir," she says, "sometimes he is a kind of Puritan."

Sir Andrew. O! if I thought *that* I would beat him like a dog.

Sir Toby. What, for being a Puritan? Thine exquisite reason, dear knight.

Sir Andrew. I have no exquisite reason for it, but I have reasons good enough.

Maria. The devil a Puritan that he is, or anything constantly but a time-pleaser; an affectioned ass, that cons state without book, and utters it by great swaths; the best persuaded of himself, so crammed as he thinks with excellences that it is his ground of faith that all who look on him love him, and on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work.

Sir Toby. What wilt thou do?

Maria. I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of love, wherein by the color of his beard, the shape of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expression of his eye, forehead, and complexion, he shall find himself most feelingly personated. I can write very like my lady,

your niece. On a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of our hands.

Sir Toby. Excellent! I smell a device.

Sir Andrew. I have it in *my* nose too.

Sir Toby. He shall think by the letters that thou wilt drop that they come from my niece, and that she is in love with him.

Maria. My purpose is indeed a horse of that color.

Sir Andrew. And your horse now would make him an ass.

Maria [*turning on Sir Andrew*]. Ass! — I doubt not.

Sir Andrew. O! it will be admirable!

Maria. Sport royal, I warrant you. I will plant you two, and let the fool make a third, where he shall find the letter; observe his construction of it. For this night, to bed, and dream on the event.

All this scene of the noisy, tipsy revel is admirable. Malvolio is entirely in the right, and is pragmatically trying to do his duty. Sir Toby and the fool, half-tipsy, will do nothing but sing. Maria is making eyes at Sir Toby; Sir Andrew, with lagging wits, tries to keep up with the fun around him, but hardly comprehends a word of it. Maria declares Malvolio is no real Puritan, intimating that she might respect him if his Puritanism were genuine; but that he is a conceited ass, and a pretentious pedant, crammed with self-conceit; and thereupon she lays a plot to be revenged on him. Can we imagine Nerissa counterfeiting her lady's hand to play off a coarse trick on old Balthazar? But Olivia has forsaken the practical superintendence of her household for the indulgence of sentimental grief, for which all her people permit themselves to blame her.

Scene 4.

This scene is in the Duke's house. He has called for music. He desires a sweet, old, melancholy song, and Feste, Olivia's fool, who is roving round the palace, is sent for to sing to him. Meantime he communes with Cæsario.

Come hither, boy. If ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it, remember me;
For such as I am, all true lovers are. . . .
How dost thou like this tune?

Viola. It gives a very echo to the seat
Where love is throned.

Duke. Thou dost speak masterly.
My life upon 't, young though thou art, thine eye
Hath stayed upon some favor that it loves.
Hath it not, boy?

Viola. A little, by your favor.

Duke. What kind of woman is 't?

Viola. Of your complexion.

Duke. She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?

Viola. About your years, my lord.

Duke. Too old, by heaven! Let still the woman take
An elder than herself. So wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart.
For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and won,
Than women's are.

Viola. I think it well, my lord.

Duke. Then let thy love be younger than thyself,
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent.
For women are as roses; whose fair flower,
Being once displayed, doth fall that very hour.

Viola. And so they are. Alas! that they are so;
To die e'en when they to perfection grow.

[*Enter the fool.*

Duke. O fellow, come, the song we had last night.
Mark it, Cæsario, it is old and plain.
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
Do use to chant it. It is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love
Like the old age.

SONG.

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;

Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair, cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death — no one so true
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O! where
Sad true lover ne'er find my grave,
To weep there.

Duke. There 's for thy pains.

Fool. No pains, sir. I take pleasure in singing, sir.

Duke. I 'll pay thy pleasure, then.

Fool. Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid one time or another.

Duke. I give thee leave to leave me.

Fool. Now the melancholy god protect thee, and the tailor make thy doublet of changeable silk, for thy mind is a very opal. I would have men of such constancy put to sea, that their business might be everything and their intent everywhere. For that 's it that always makes a good voyage of nothing.

You no doubt noticed in this colloquy the delicate description of the song. It was old and plain; but spinning-girls and knitters in the sun, or lace-makers, who wove their threads with bones, were used to sing it. Alas! the song was far more suited to the state of mind of the false page than of his master. Note, too, the piece of good advice that, under cover of his folly, Feste ventures to give Duke Orsino. With his knowledge of human nature he sees the Duke is changeable, and only half in earnest in any of his doings.

Then the Duke, left alone with his page, tries to send him again on an embassy to Olivia. Viola seeks to be excused the commission.

Viola. But if she cannot love you, sir?
Duke. I cannot so be answered.
Viola. Sooth, but you must.
Say that some lady, as, perhaps there is,
Hath for your love as great a pang of heart
As you have for Olivia. You cannot love her.
You tell her so. Must she not then be answered?
Duke. There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart. No woman's heart
So big to hold so much. . . . Make no compare
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia.
Viola. Ay, but I know —
Duke. What dost thou know?
Viola. Too well what love women to men may owe.
In faith they are as true in heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.
Duke. And what 's her history?
Viola. A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat, like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief. Was not *this* love indeed?
We men may say more, swear more; but, indeed,
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove
Much in our vows, but little in our love.
Duke. But died thy sister of her love, my boy?
Viola. I am all the daughters of my father's house,
And all the brothers too, — and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this lady?
Duke. Ay, that 's the theme.
To her in haste. Give her this jewel. Say
My love can give no place, bide no delay.

Viola had almost beguiled the Duke into forgetting Olivia, when, perhaps as a self-inflicted punishment for letting

her feelings get the better of her, she offers to go on his embassy.

Scene 5.

This is the inimitable scene wherein saucy Maria with her confidants befool Malvolio. Fabian is a sort of gentleman-attendant on Olivia. The scene is very hard to read effectively, because of the asides that break Malvolio's pompous soliloquy. You will observe how Fabian is busy all the time trying to hush Sir Toby, who in his turn, whenever Sir Andrew attempts to speak, grows angry with him.

The scene is in Olivia's garden.

Sir Toby. Come thy ways, Signior Fabian.

Fabian. Nay, I 'll come. If I lose a scruple of this sport let me be boiled to death with melancholy.

Sir Toby. Would'st thou not be glad to have the niggardly rascal who worries us come by some notable shame?

Fabian. I would exult, man. You know he brought me out of favor with my lady about a bear-baiting here.

Sir Toby. To anger him we 'll have the bear again, and we will fool him black and blue. Shall we not, Sir Andrew?

Sir Andrew. An we do not, it is a pity of our lives.

Sir Toby. Here comes Maria, the little villain! How now, my nettle of India?

Maria. Get ye all three into the box-tree. Malvolio 's coming down this walk. He has been yonder in the sun, practising behavior to his own shadow, this half-hour. Observe him, for the love of mockery; for I know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of him. Close! in the name of jesting [*throws down a letter*]. Lie thou there, for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling.

[*Exit Maria.*

Malvolio. 'T is but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me; and I have heard herself come thus near, that should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect than any one else that follows her. What should I think on 't?

Sir Toby. Here 's an overweening rogue!

Fabian. O! peace. Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him. How he jets under his ruffled plumes!

Sir Andrew. 'Slight! I could so beat the rogue—

Sir Toby. Peace, I say.

Malvolio. To be Count Malvolio!—

Sir Toby. Ah! rogue.

Sir Andrew. Pistol him! pistol him!

Sir Toby. Peace! peace!

Malvolio. There is example for it; the lady of the Strozzi married the yeoman of the wardrobe.

Sir Andrew. Fie on him, Jezebel!

Fabian. O! peace; now he 's deeply in. Look how imagination blows him!

Malvolio. Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state—

Sir Toby. O! for a stone-bow to hit him in the eye!

Malvolio.—calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet gown; having come from a day-bed where I left Olivia sleeping.

Sir Toby. Fire and brimstone!

Fabian. O, peace, peace!

Malvolio. And then to have the honors of state; and after a demure travel of regard,—telling them I know my place, as I would they should do theirs,—to ask for my kinsman Toby.

Sir Toby. Bolts and shackles!

Fabian. O, peace, peace, peace! Now, now!

Malvolio. Seven of my people with an obedient start make out for him. I frown awhile, and perchance wind up my watch, or play with . . . some rich jewel. Toby approaches; courtesies there to me,—

Sir Toby. Shall this fellow live?

Fabian. Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace.

Malvolio.—I extend my hand to him, thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control;

Sir Toby. And does not Sir Toby take you a blow on the lips, then?

Malvolio.—saying, Cousin Toby, my fortunes, having cast me on your niece, give me this prerogative of speech.

Sir Toby. What? What?

Malvolio. You must amend your drunkenness;

Sir Toby. Out, scab!

Fabian. Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.

Malvolio. — besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight, —

Sir Andrew. That 's me, I warrant you!

Malvolio. — one Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew. I knew 't was I, for many do call me fool.

Malvolio [*picking up the letter*]. What employment have we here?

Fabian. Now is the wood-cock near the gin.

Sir Toby. O! peace, and the spirit of humors intimate reading aloud to him!

Malvolio. By my life, this is my lady's hand. These be her very C's, her U's, and her T's; and thus she makes her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand!

Sir Andrew. Her C's, her U's, and her T's? Why that?

Malvolio [*reads*]. "To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes;" her very phrases! By your leave, wax. Soft! — and the impressure her Lucrece with which she uses to seal. 'T is my lady. To whom should this be?

Fabian. This wins him!

Malvolio [*reads*]. "Jove knows I love;
But who?
Lips, do not move,
No man must know."

"No man must know?" What follows? The number 's altered. "No man must know." If this should be thee, Malvolio?

Sir Toby. Marry, hang the badger!

Malvolio [*reads*]. "I may command where I adore;
But silence, like a Lucrece knife,
With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore,
M. O. A. I. doth sway my life!"

"M. O. A. I. doth sway my life," — nay, but first, let me see — let me see — let me see. "I may command where I adore." Why, she may command me. I serve her; she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity. There is no obstruction in this. And the end? What should that aphabetical position portend? If I could make that resemble something in me. Softly! "M. O. A. I."

Thus he continues, endeavoring to affix some meaning to the letter, till, on turning over the page, he finds some prose. "... Be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon

them. . . . Inure thyself to what thou art like to be. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants, . . . put thyself into the trick of singularity. . . . Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered." This seems to Malvolio to decide the authorship of the letter at once. "She *did* commend my yellow stockings," he cries; "she *did* praise my leg being cross-gartered;" and Puritan though he may be, he instantly resolves to put himself into gaudy clothes,— thanking heaven for his good fortunes. His antics are so comical that Fabian, hidden in the box-bush, declares he would not have missed the sport for a pension of thousands, to be paid by the Sophi. On Malvolio's leaving that part of the grounds to change his toilet, Maria, who has been watching, rushes in.

Maria. If you will then see the fruits of the sport, mark his first approach to my lady. He will come to her in yellow stockings, and 't is a color she abhors; and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests; and he will smile upon her, which will now be so unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him into a notable contempt. If you will see it, follow me!

Act III. *Scene* 1.

Viola, on another errand for the Duke, is crossing Olivia's garden in company with the fool Feste. Feste has a shrewd guess that there is something strange about his companion, and ventures on a hint that he may be carrying on some intrigue with his mistress. This does not, however, hinder him from taking the page's money, and favoring his interview with the Lady Olivia. Poor Olivia! she needed indeed a husband to save her from her disorderly menial crew. Viola's reflections on the office of a fool are excellent.

> This fellow 's wise enough to play the fool,
> And to do that well craves a kind of wit.
> He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
> The quality of persons, and the time;
> And like the haggard, check at every feather
> That comes before his eye. This is a practice
> As full of labor as a wise man's art.

Here the two knights enter, — Sir Andrew exchanging French compliments with the Duke's gentleman; and then Olivia, attended by Maria, somewhat forgetful of her vow of strict seclusion, comes hurrying into the garden. The others are dismissed, and then follows the two girls' interview. Viola begins by being on her guard; Olivia, the great lady, knowing she must make the first advances to Cæsario, proceeds to encourage her visitor. Viola, meaning to protect herself, begins, "Dear lady — " when Olivia, perceiving this will be the prelude to an expostulation, breaks in breathlessly to excuse herself for forwardness in having sent the ring; one feels she had been brooding over it ever since its rejection. To her advances, to her self-reproaches, all Viola will answer is, "I pity you." Then Olivia, calling up her pride, tries to make believe she had not been in earnest, and loftily dismisses the Duke's messenger. Viola accepts the dismissal, but asks: "May I not carry some message to my master?" "Stay," cries Olivia; "before you go, let me know what you think of me." "I think," says Viola, "you think you are not what you are," — that is, you do not know you are deceiving yourself. Olivia answers, "I think the same of you." "Then you think right," says Viola; "I am not what I seem." Olivia resumes her advances, and then a flash from Viola's eyes — Viola, who knows so well how to hide love with delicate tenderness — causes Olivia's

passion to break all bounds; she forgets herself completely, and her love receives a firm but dignified rejection. Even this does not prevent Olivia's saying, —

> Yet come again; for thou perchance may'st move
> That heart which now abhors to like his love.

Scene 2.

The interview between Duke Orsino's gentleman and Olivia had a spectator; one who saw it from the orchard, — Sir Andrew Ague-cheek. He is indignant at favors shown to the Duke's menial, — for Olivia's gestures must have been as suggestive as her words, — and is for giving up his suit, and going home. This, Sir Toby, who has not quite plucked his pigeon, and his confederate Fabian, are anxious to prevent. Sir Toby therefore eagerly urges Sir Andrew to remain, and challenge that upstart, the Duke's messenger.

Sir Toby. Challenge me the Count's youth, and fight with him; hurt him in eleven places; my niece shall take note of it; and assure thyself there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with women than report of valor.

Fabian. There is no way but this, Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew. Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?

Sir Toby. Go, write it in a martial hand; be curst and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent, and full of invention; taunt him with the license of ink; if thou *thou'st* him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper; although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set 'em down. Go! about it! let there be gall enough in thine ink; though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter; about it!

[*Exit Sir Andrew.*

Fabian. This is a dear mannikin to you, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby. I have been dear to him, lad, — some two thousand strong.

Fabian. We shall have a rare letter from him; but you 'll not deliver it?

Sir Toby. Never trust me, then; and by all means stir on the youth to an answer; I think oxen and wainropes cannot hale them together; for Andrew, if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as would clog the foot of a flea, I 'll eat the rest of his anatomy.

Fabian. And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage no great presage of cruelty.

Scene 3.

Then comes a pretty scene in the street between Captain Antonio and Sebastian. Antonio, though it is death to him to walk the streets of the Duke's capital, has with rash love followed Sebastian. Before they part he forces his purse on the young man with tender care.

Antonio. Hold, sir — here 's my purse;
In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,
Is best to lodge; I will bespeak our diet,
Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge,
With viewing of the town. There shall you have me.
Sebastian. Why I your purse?
Antonio. Haply your eye shall light upon some toy,
You have desire to purchase; and your store
Is not, I think, for idle markets, sir.
Sebastian. I 'll be your purse-bearer.

Scene 4.

In this scene we see Maria acting *confidante* to Countess Olivia's love, — sure to betray her mistress on the first temptation. Olivia, being out of spirits, — desirous even of the house accounts if they will distract her thoughts, — sends for Malvolio. Maria hints to her that he is conducting himself in a strange fashion, and is surely possessed. Olivia replies: —

Go, call him hither; I 'm as mad as he.
How now, Malvolio?

The steward, entering in his fantastic dress, ogles his mistress, smiles on her, quotes portions of the letter he has committed to memory, and altogether bewilders her. "Why appear you," says Maria, "with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?"

Malvolio. "Be not afraid of greatness," — 't was well writ.
Olivia. What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?
Malvolio. "Some are born great, —"
Olivia. Ha!
Malvolio. "Some achieve greatness, —"
Olivia. What sayest thou!
Malvolio. "And some have greatness thrust upon them!"
Olivia. Heaven restore thee!
Malvolio. "Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, —"
Olivia. Thy yellow stockings?
Malvolio. "And wished to see thee cross-gartered."
Olivia. Cross-gartered?
Malvolio. "Go to, thou art made if thou desirest to be so, —"
Olivia. Am I made?
Malvolio. "If not, let me see thee a servant still."
Olivia. Why, this is very midsummer madness!

At this moment a servant reports that, with great difficulty, he has succeeded in bringing back to the house the Duke's page; and Olivia, only pausing to desire that great care may be taken of Malvolio, hurries out to meet him. As she goes she adds that Maria had better send Sir Toby to look after the poor fellow. This order seems to Malvolio a glorious confirmation of the esteem in which Countess Olivia holds him. "So! so!" he cries, "no worse man than Sir Toby to look to me! . . . I have limed her; but it is Jove's doing, and Jove make me thankful. And when she went away, — 'Let this fellow be looked to.' Fellow! not Malvolio!"

Maria, Sir Toby, and Fabian burst in upon their victim. Maria insists he is possessed of a devil. Sir Toby makes the most irritating attempts to soothe him; Fabian makes mock exhortations to the rest to be gentle with him. Indeed, he is really afraid they may carry the joke too far; and when Malvolio, with contempt and indignation, stalks away, he exclaims, "Why, we shall make him mad indeed." Maria, in the true spirit of a coarse woman, is reckless of consequences. She and Sir Toby mean to make the most of their fun.

Malvolio is no sooner out of the way than in comes Sir Andrew Ague-cheek, with his absurd challenge, which he confides for delivery to Sir Toby. The close of it is: "Fare thee well. And God have mercy upon one of our souls! He may have mercy upon mine, but my hope is better, and so look to thyself." After receiving Sir Toby's advice to lie in wait for Cæsario, to draw on his appearance, and swear roundly at him, Sir Andrew swaggers away. Then speaks Sir Toby. For all his evil living and his drunkenness, there were still left in him some traditions of a gentleman.

> Now will I not deliver this letter; for the behavior of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good capacity and breeding. His employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less. Therefore, this letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in the youth; he will find it comes from a clod-pole. But, sir, I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth; set upon Ague-cheek a notable report of valor; and drive the gentleman (as I know his youth will aptly receive it) into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury, and impetuosity. This will so fright them both, that they will kill one another by the look, like cockatrices.

Then Viola and Olivia enter. Olivia — fully conscious that her passion has carried her too far — is pleading with

Cæsario for his good opinion. Viola, with rare fidelity to her lord, endeavors to turn all her advances to the interest of Orsino. "The distance of rank," says Mrs. Jameson, "which separates the Countess from the page, the real sex — known to us — of Viola, the dignified elegance of Olivia's deportment, except when passion gets the better of her pride, her generous care of Malvolio in the midst of her own troubles, — all these circumstances raise Olivia in our fancy, and render her caprice for the page a source of merriment and interest, not a subject of reproach."

Olivia. I have said too much unto a heart of stone,
And laid mine honor too unchary out;
There 's something in me that reproves my fault,
But such a headstrong, potent fault it is
That it but mocks reproof.
Viola. With the same 'havior that your passion bears,
Go on my master's griefs.
Olivia. Here, wear this jewel for me; 't is my picture.
Refuse it not; it hath no tongue to vex you;
And I beseech you, come again to-morrow.
What shall *you* ask of *me* that I 'll deny,
That honor, saved, may upon asking give?
Viola. Nothing but this, — your true love for my master.
Olivia. How with mine honor may I give him that
Which I have given to you?
Viola. I will acquit you.
Olivia. Well, come again to-morrow. Fare thee well.
A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell.

[*Exit Olivia.*

Olivia has no sooner left the spot than Viola finds herself accosted by Sir Toby. He forces on her Sir Andrew's challenge, and the abject cowardice of the poor girl is perfectly delightful. She is ready to make any compromise, or to offer any apology that can be required of her, rather than

fight her challenger. She implores Sir Toby to make up the quarrel. She says, "I beseech you do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is. It is something of my negligence, nothing of my purpose." Sir Toby makes believe to accept the mission, desiring Fabian to stay by the gentleman, lest he should run away. Fabian employs the time in drawing a picture of Sir Andrew as a renowned fire-eater. The shamelessness with which Viola owns that she "is one who would rather go with Sir Priest than Sir Knight," might have opened his eyes to the fact that she was neither boy nor man.

Meantime Sir Toby is frightening Sir Andrew (who has no more stomach for the duel than poor Viola) with an account of the formidable and furious adversary who has been provoked to mortal combat.

Sir Andrew. Pox on 't. I 'll not meddle with him.

Sir Toby. Ay, but he will not now be pacified. Fabian can scarce hold him yonder.

Sir Andrew. Plague on 't. Had I thought he had been valiant, and so cunning in fence, I 'd have seen him damned ere I had challenged him. Let him let the matter slip, and I 'll give him my horse, gray Capilet.

Then to Viola, who enters at that moment with Fabian, Sir Toby (whispering) says: —

There 's no remedy, sir. He *will* fight with you for his oath's sake. Marry, he hath better bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth talking of; therefore, draw for the supportance of his vow. He protests he will not hurt you.

Viola [*aside*]. Pray God, defend me! A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man!

As she says this, Sir Toby has been whispering to Sir Andrew: —

There is no remedy; the gentleman will for his honor's sake have one bout with you. He cannot by the duello avoid it, but he has promised me as he is a gentleman and soldier, he will not hurt you. Come on! To 't.

Sir Andrew. Pray God, he keep his oath.

At this critical moment enters the sea-captain Antonio. Seeing, as he imagines, a man about to draw on his beloved Sebastian, he interferes, and wants to fight Sir Toby. Viola's pleading, the moment she gets a chance to speak to her adversary, is deliciously womanly. Viola is the only one of Shakspeare's heroines of whom he permits himself to make fun.

Viola [*to Sir Andrew*]. Pray, sir, put your sword up, if you please.

Sir Andrew. Marry will I, sir, — and for that horse I promised you, I will be as good as my word. He will bear you easily, and reins well.

At this moment come up constables, sent to arrest Antonio. The scene is piteous. Antonio, when he finds there is no escape, turns with a little resentment to the youth he supposes to be Sebastian: —

This comes of seeking you; but there 's no remedy. Now my necessity makes me ask you for my purse. You stand amazed, but be of comfort.

Alas! Viola denies that she has ever seen his purse. She offers half of her own little store, and is dumb-founded when Antonio breaks out: —

Do not tempt my misery,
Lest that it make me so unsound a man
As to upbraid you with those kindnesses
That I have done for you.

Viola. I know of none;
Nor knew I you by voice or any feature.
I hate ingratitude more in a man

> Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,
> Or any taint of vice, whose strong corruption
> Inhabits our frail blood.
> *Antonio.* O! heavens themselves!

And then turning around to the bystanders, the officers of the law and the assailants of Viola, he proceeds in burning bitter words to tell them of his goodness towards this very man who in their presence has declared he does not know him.

But as he is led off, Viola, deaf to what is passing round her, has seized upon a sudden hope, born of his words. He may have mistaken her for her twin, — her brother. Sir Toby as she stands spell-bound thinks he sees a chance of some more mischief. He cries: —

> A very dishonest, paltry boy, and more a coward than a hare; his dishonesty appears in leaving his friend here in necessity and denying him, — and for his cowardice, ask Fabian.
> *Fabian.* A coward, a most devout coward, — religious in it.
> *Sir Andrew.* 'Slid, I 'll after him again, and beat him.
> *Sir Toby.* Do! cuff him soundly, but never draw the sword.

Then, as Sir Andrew, breathing fury, leaves the spot, Sir Toby whispers to Fabian, "I dare lay any money 't will be nothing yet!"

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

The fourth act opens before Olivia's house; Feste, the fool, has been sent to see if he can find Cæsario, and encounters Sebastian; Sebastian, to get rid of him, gives him money out of the poor captain's purse. Indeed, I think in every scene the fool gets something from somebody.

At this moment Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Fabian come upon the scene, and Sir Andrew (never doubting that the

young man before him is his late cowardly adversary) strikes Sebastian. Instantly he finds himself receiving a sound beating. Feste hurries away to call Olivia, very sure that she will be angry at an attack on her new favorite. Entering on the scene in haste, Olivia finds Sir Toby and (as she supposes) her love, Cæsario, with their swords drawn. She cries: — "Hold, Toby! on thy life I charge thee, hold!"

Sir Toby. Madam?
Olivia. Will it be ever thus? Ungracious wretch,
Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves,
Where manners ne'er were preached! out of my sight!
Be not offended, dear Cæsario; I prithee, gentle friend,
[*Exeunt Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Fabian.*
Let thy fair wisdom, not thy passion, sway
In this uncivil and unjust extent
Against thy peace. Go with me to my house,
And hear thou there how many fruitless pranks
This ruffian hath botched up, that thou thereby
May'st smile at this. Thou shalt not choose but go;
Do not deny; beshrew his soul for me,
He started one poor heart of mine in thee.
Sebastian. What relish is in this? how runs the stream?
Or I am mad, or else this is a dream.
Let Fancy still my sense in Lethe steep
If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep.
Olivia. Nay, come, I prithee; would thou 'dst be ruled by me?
Sebastian. Madam, I will.
Olivia. O! say so, and so be.

Great is Olivia's delight at what she believes to be Cæsario's surrender and submission.

Scene 2.

Within the house Maria and her confederates have plotted to sham-exorcise poor Malvolio, whom they are treating as a madman. They have dressed up the fool to personate

Sir Topas, the curate; and, as the room in which Malvolio has been placed is dark, and the fool is a ventriloquist, Malvolio is wholly unable to detect the fraud.

The steward is evidently a man of some pretensions to an austere piety; I wonder no one quotes now-a-days his words, "I think nobly of the soul, and by no means approve that opinion," when it is suggested to him that the soul of his great-grandmother might haply inhabit (or have inhabited) a bird. Sir Toby by this time seems to have grown anxious to be well out of the scrape; yet he cannot refuse himself the enjoyment of more fun.

Malvolio. Sir Topas, good Sir Topas, go to my lady.

Fool. Out, hyperbolical fiend! how vexest thou this man! talkest thou nothing but of ladies?

The next scene is the fool's *tête-à-tête* interview with Malvolio in his own proper person. Feste enters the chamber singing, each line being interrupted by a despairing call from Malvolio. Very much changed is his behavior to the fool since the first time we heard him speak of that vain personage to Countess Olivia. The room being dark, the fool changes his voice at pleasure, from his natural tones to those of Sir Topas.

Malvolio. Good fool, help me to some light, and some paper. I tell thee I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria.

Fool. Well-a-day, — that you were, sir!

Malvolio. By this hand, I *am*; good fool, some ink, paper, and light, and convey what I will set down to my lady; it shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did.

Fool. I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? or do you counterfeit?

Malvolio. Believe me, I am not; I tell thee true.

Fool. Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman till I see his brains; I will fetch you light, and paper, and ink.

We are glad that the fool makes the prisoner this promise; but the fun has gone quite far enough, and he knows it.

Scene 3.

Here, in Olivia's garden, we see the bewildered Sebastian; and presently in comes the Countess, who, in her perplexity, makes the request that while he is in his present humor of compliance he will go with her to a neighboring chantry, and solemnly pledge his faith to her; she has consulted her confessor on the subject, and brings him with her. She says: —

> Blame not this haste of mine; if you mean well
> Now go with me, and with this holy man
> Into the chantry by; there, before him,
> And underneath that consecrated roof,
> Plight me the full assurance of your faith;
> That my most jealous and too doubtful soul
> May live at peace. He shall conceal it
> Whiles you are willing. It shall come to note
> What time we will our celebration keep
> According to my birth. What do you say?
> *Sebastian.* I'll follow this good man, and go with you,
> And having sworn truth, ever will be true.
> *Olivia.* Then lead the way, good father; an' heavens so shine
> That they may fairly note this act of mine.

ACT V. *Scene* 1.

In this scene we have the Duke in the street before Olivia's house; he is coming to call upon his lady, and obtain some light upon the strange events reported to him by Cæsario. At this moment the constables bring up Antonio; whose courage and seamanship the Duke frankly acknowledges, though at first he is prepared to execute sharp justice on the old seaman as an offender; but Viola pleads for her protector, who saved her, she believes, when

in peril of her life, and the Duke is moved to show clemency to his gallant enemy. He thus addresses him: —

Notable pirate! thou salt-water thief!
What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies
Whom thou in terms so bloody, and so dear,
Hast made thine enemies?
Antonio. Orsino, noble sir,
Be pleased that I shake off those names you give me.
Antonio never yet was thief or pirate,
Though, I confess, — on base and ground enough, —
Orsino's enemy. A witchcraft drew me hither.
That most ungrateful boy, there by your side,
From the rude sea's enraged and foamy mouth
Did I redeem; a wreck past hope he was.
His life I gave him, and did thereto add
My love, without retention or restraint,
All his in dedication: for his sake
Did I expose myself — purely for his love —
Into the danger of this adverse town;
Drew to defend him when he was beset,
Where — being apprehended — his false cunning
(Not meaning to partake with me in danger)
Taught him to face me out of his acquaintance,
And grew a twenty-years-removèd thing
While one could wink; denied me my own purse
Which I had recommended to his use,
Not half an hour before.
Viola. How *can* this be?
Duke. When came he to this town?
Antonio. To-day, my lord; and for three months before
(No interim — not a minute's vacancy)
Both night and day did we keep company.
[*Enter Olivia and attendants.*
Duke. Here comes the Countess! now Heaven walks on earth! —
But for thee, fellow, fellow, thy words are madness;
Three months this youth hath tended upon *me*.
But more of this anon. Take him aside!

Olivia is no longer anxious to shun the Duke; she is betrothed, — betrothed solemnly in holy sanctuary; he cannot

have her for his wife, and she seems to dread no unjust revengeful usage from a man of his noble character. Yet even in the Duke's presence she turns first to Viola, mistaking her for her young bridegroom, who has left her (as she thinks) to attend upon his master; and all the explanations offered make confusion worse confounded.

Olivia. What would my lord (but that he may not have)
Wherein Olivia may seem serviceable?
Cæsario! you do not keep promise with me.
Viola. Madam?
Duke. Gracious Olivia, —
Olivia. What do you say, Cæsario? — Good my lord, —
Viola. My lord would speak, my duty hushes me.
Olivia. If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,
It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear
As howling after music.
Duke. Still so cruel?
Olivia. Still so constant, lord.

Then the Duke, carried away by anger as he reads her secret on the faces of his courtiers, furious with his treacherous page, and provoked by the bold bearing and unnecessary insolence of Olivia, cries: —

Why should I not, had I the heart to do't,
Like to the Egyptian thief, at point of death,
Kill what I love? — a savage jealousy
That sometimes savors nobly. But hear me this:
Since you to non-regardance cast my faith,
And that I partly know the instrument
That screws me from my true place in your favor,
Live you, the marble-hearted tyrant, still;
But this your minion, whom I know you love,
And whom, by Heaven, I swear I tender dearly,
Him will I tear out of that cruel eye,
Where he sits crownèd in his master's spite.
Come, boy, with me; my thoughts are ripe in mischief;

I 'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,
To spite a raven's heart within a dove. [*Going.*
Viola [*following*]. And I, most jocund, apt, and willingly,
To do you rest, a thousand deaths would die.
Olivia. Where goes Cæsario?
Viola. After him I love,
More than I love these eyes, more than my life,
More by all means than e'er I shall love wife.

Then Olivia, beside herself with wounded love, and terror, and contempt for her new idol's treachery, calls on him frantically to come back; one of the attendants has rushed to call the priest, whom she adjures to corroborate her statement that she has been solemnly plighted to Cæsario not two hours before.

The Duke who by the fool's hints has probably for some days past been induced to suspect that Cæsario is his rival in Olivia's good opinion, and who in his first outbreak has uttered threats with (I am disposed to think) no very cruel intentions, no sooner learns that a consecrated tie binds his late favorite to Olivia than he briefly says, with dignity: —

Farewell, and take her; but direct thy feet
Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.

"My lord, I do protest, —" cries poor Viola.

"O! do not swear," responds no-less-to-be-pitied Olivia. "Hold little faith, though thou hast too much fear."

At this moment in staggers Sir Andrew Ague-cheek with a bleeding head, crying out that he and Sir Toby have both been worsted by Cæsario; Sir Toby, although drunk, is gentleman enough to make light of his hurts, though he falls foul of the drunken surgeon. Olivia, as mistress of her household, takes the command, and orders them both to bed, and

their hurts to be looked to. At that moment appears Sebastian, who takes no notice of the Duke and courtiers, but at once addresses the Countess, his lady.

Then, step by step, all is made clear; to the last the Duke cannot quite get over his custom of looking upon Viola as a boy, even though he offers her his hand and heart as soon as she shall have resumed her maiden habiliments.

"It seems too hard," says the author in the "Monthly Packet," "that Viola, the very soul of fidelity should be accused of treachery and baseness on all sides, without seeing any answer to make or any way of clearing herself. She stands thunderstruck while Antonio, Olivia, the Priest, and Orsino, one after the other, turn upon her.

"It makes a brilliant picture; the Duke, flushed with excitement, in the foreground, in the background the venerable priest, Antonio and the officers, beautiful Olivia, gazing in bewilderment at the handsome youth praying for her forgiveness, and Viola quivering with hope and delight as she sees her beloved brother once more. Suddenly Sebastian becomes aware of Antonio, and, puzzled at his greeting, stands astonished in his turn, gazing on the Duke's page with amazement."

"Twelfth Night" is a play that should be read as a whole. The rattling fire of its fun loses its force when the story is given, as I have given it, in instalments.

When I first read these papers as parlor lectures in Baltimore, I earnestly and repeatedly entreated those who heard me to consider them as introductory to the pleasure they would feel in studying the plays in their complete form. I would strongly recommend for reading aloud Bowdler's Shakspeare, Rolfe's School Shakspeare, or that which Charles

Kemble prepared for his own readings in public, which has been lately published in England, and can be had at very small cost. Shakspeare, as Coleridge says, is never immoral; the passages which contain gross language are all put into the mouths of the wicked, though the manners of the age permitted delicate young women sometimes to use as similes subjects which our sex would now-a-days avoid. But in reading aloud it is disagreeable to stumble suddenly on such allusions; they are no part of the play; they are specks on the glass, mere motes in the sunbeam, and can be left out (as indeed such passages can be, thank God, in all *great* writers) without in the smallest degree injuring the effect, or impairing the beauty or the purpose of the drama.

Hazlitt says of this play: "We have friendliness for Sir Toby, we patronize Sir Andrew, we have an understanding with the fool, a sneaking kindness for Maria and her rogueries; we feel a regard for Malvolio, and sympathy with his gravity, his smiles, his cross-garters, his yellow stockings, and his imprisonment, but there is something that excites in us a stronger feeling, — it is Viola's confession of her love." And Campbell adds: "The character of Viola is so sweetly drawn that I have never seen justice done to it upon the stage; Mrs. Siddons was too tragic, and Mrs. Jordan too comic, to personate Viola."

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THIS is one of the most complete of Shakspeare's dramas. There is a variety of characters in it, each interesting in itself, each interesting through its connection with its surroundings.

Antonio is the central figure of the piece, the pivot around which they all revolve; but Portia is *the* character of the play, and to my thinking, the "highest, noblest, best," in Shakspeare's gallery of women.

Commentators are divided as to the leading idea of the play, if it must have a leading idea to make it perfect. Is it friendship? Is it justice? Is it property, in its relations to its possessors and to others?

I think the latter. We have three very rich people, — Antonio, Portia, Shylock. Not one of them is made happy by riches. Antonio is saddened by responsibilities, and beset by parasites; Portia is not free to choose for herself in marriage, and is persecuted by suitors; Shylock's heart is a serpent's den, and his house, as Jessica informs us, is a hell. He is wretched himself, and the cause of wretchedness in others.

Antonio is simply the rich man, generous (as our American rich men so often are), but without wide-spreading sympathies. Portia is different. Her heart is throbbing with

sympathies; the distribution of her money will go hand in hand with her warm feelings. Whatever befalls her, she will walk through life scattering blessings as she goes.

Bassanio is greatly her inferior. He has led the life of a gay, good-natured spendthrift, though he is both a scholar and a soldier; and there is far better stuff in him than at first appears. Antonio has discerned his better nature, Portia brings it into action, and we part from him with an assured hope that he is purged of his early weaknesses, — remembering likewise Becky Sharp's reflection, that it is easy to be good on £3000 a year.

Each character does something for which it has to present excuses; each wrong has something right in it; each right has something wrong. Antonio's higher nature is stirred within him at sight of the cruel grasping of the Jew. He treats the unbeliever with contumely, — there his fault lies. Bassanio, the true friend and gentlemanly lover, is reckless in his use of money, even squandering in a farewell banquet to his friends part of the three thousand ducats borrowed for other uses. Jessica, with all the excuses we can make for her, is a dishonest, disobedient, treacherous daughter. Nerissa, faithful as she is, is pert; Gratiano is devoted to his friends, but vulgar in his nature and loose of tongue; Shylock has the wrongs of his race to retaliate upon the Christians, — all have flaws except the peerless Portia.

The play was founded on two stories. The germ of the casket-story may be found in the "Gesta Romanorum," a tale-book of the Middle Ages; and the rest is supplied from the old ballad of "Geruntius, or the Jew of Venice," — taken probably from an Indian source, and brought home from the Crusades, — or it may have been founded on an old

Italian story. The play is thought to have been written five years before Queen Elizabeth's death, and was first printed in her lifetime (1600).

Mrs. Jameson classes Portia with Beatrice and Rosalind, as characters distinguished for mental superiority. "In Portia," she says, "we have intellect kindled into romance by a poetical imagination; in Beatrice, intellect animated by spirit; in Rosalind, intellect softened by sensibility. What Portia *does*," she goes on to say, "is forgotten in what she *is*, — in the rare and harmonious blending of energy, reflection, and feeling in her character. . . . Her high mental powers, her enthusiasm of temperament, her decision of purpose, and her buoyancy of spirit are innate;" but from the circumstances that have surrounded her all her life, she has received "a commanding grace, a high-bred elegance, a spirit of magnificence in all she says and does, as one to whom splendor had been familiar from her infancy. She treads as though her footsteps had always been among marble palaces, beneath roofs of fretted gold, o'er cedar floors and pavements of jasper and porphyry, amid gardens full of statues and flowers and fountains and haunting music. She is full of penetrative wisdom, and genuine tenderness, and lively wit; but as she has never known want or grief or fear or disappointment, her wisdom is without a touch of the sombre or the sad." I do not quite agree in this last remark of Mrs. Jameson's. When the play opens, Portia is dreading disappointment, and a little cloud of melancholy overshadows her merriment; but it passes away almost at once, and she stands forth in glorious sunshine.

We gather that she was the only child of a very rich Venetian nobleman, whose palace, Belmont, stood upon some

lovely promontory between Venice and Trieste, overlooking the blue Adriatic Sea, — "such a scene as we often see in one of Claude's or Poussin's Elysian landscapes." Here she grew up, educated by her father in all that would best fit her for the responsibilities of heiress-hood. Her father's palace, while he lived, was filled with the noblest guests. She saw men rather than women, and was familiar with the best of them. One struck her maiden fancy, — one gayer, brighter than the rest, — the handsome young Bassanio. But her father seems to have been mistrustful of his character; he dared nôt favor his suit, he could not bring himself to oppose it. In this strait, being, as we are expressly told, a man of piety, he appears to have submitted his case to the judgment of God. He made the question of Portia's marriage hang on the choice that might be made among three caskets. He barred frivolous competition by exacting a promise that the suitor who lost would wed no other lady, and left the selection of his daughter's husband to the decision of the Lord.

Among the guests who had frequented Belmont, and had shared in the task of educating Portia, was her cousin Doctor Bellario, the wisest lawyer in Italy. Portia evidently looks up to him as her master. It is probable he taught her law, — at least its rudiments, — which every woman who owns property ought to understand. Thus, when the play opens, we find Portia living without a guardian at Belmont. Her companion and lady-in-waiting is Nerissa, — not a duenna, but a girl a little older than herself; her major-domo is the faithful Balthazar; and her servants are old family retainers, so well disciplined by their late master that they can be trusted to give no suitor any hint as to the casket which contains the picture.

ACT I. *Scene* 1.

When the play opens, Antonio is conversing in a street of Venice (or rather, I suppose, on one of those little paved landing-places which lie along the Grand Canal at intervals) with two commonplace friends, Salarino and Salanio. "Any tolerable picture of Venice will show us some spot — some grand staircase, or shady colonnade — where we may fancy Antonio standing with his friends, looking down on the deceitful waves to which he has trusted his mercantile honor and his fortunes. Antonio's first words suggest the standing puzzle of his character, which gives him the peculiar fascination belonging to anything mysterious. From whence comes the gentle melancholy which pervades the whole nature of this prosperous merchant, this true gentleman, so worthy in himself, so deeply beloved by others? Shakspeare never explains the mystery, so we may imagine something in Antonio's antecedents to account for his gravity, or else a natural sad turn of mind which only now and then becomes manifest to his associates. He is never bitter or morose, but a certain stately sadness rests upon him, making him appear years older than his lively friends. Yet it is mostly in relation to his friends that we see anything of Antonio. He stands as the representative of friendship in its highest form of unselfish devotion, even while suggesting all sorts of interesting possibilities as to his own past and future."

In his first speech he complains of a vague sadness, — a sadness occasioned, I think, partly by temperament, partly by presentiments, and in part by a sense of mercantile responsibility. Antonio's temperament may be a little like Hamlet's. He may have by nature the ill gift of looking on both sides of things, a gift which if it does not paralyze the power of

action (as in Hamlet) often makes its possessor, when he has acted, restless and miserable. Salarino and Salanio are trying to enliven the rich man by allusions to his riches.

Antonio. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.
Salarino. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail, —
Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,
Or, as it were the pageants of the sea, —
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.
Salanio. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;
Peering in maps, for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
Would make me sad.
Salarino. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
Then tell not me, I know Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.
Antonio. Believe me, no. I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year.
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.
Salanio. Why, then you are in love!
Antonio. Fie! Fie!
Salanio. Not in love, neither? Then let 's say you are sad
Because you are not merry. And 't were as easy

For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry
Because you are not sad.
Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare you well.
We leave you now in better company.
Salarino. I would have stayed till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Then Antonio, when he has politely answered "Your worth is very dear in my regard," adds, *sotto voce*, with appreciation of their true character, —

I take it your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

They overhear this speech, apparently, and though it suits them to take no notice of it, they are naturally put out of countenance by the observation. It is one of the penalties attached to the possession of riches, that the rich man is apt to see the worst side of human nature; and thence he grows mistrustful. He can, if he will, do something to make life easier to almost every one who approaches him. His associates cannot help remembering this, and hoping that he may think of dropping for their good some crumb from his abundance. The habit of American rich men is to be so very generous that it puts them at a disadvantage in society. Then too, the American "rich man" has enormously more "spending money" than rich men have abroad, especially those who have been born to landed interests and obligations. It makes one almost as sad as Antonio to see how rich men are "put upon" in this country. Every one who has a hobby thinks the richest man he knows should mount it too. Innumerable fellow-beings with their various wants "do not see why" the rich man should not step in

with a beneficent supply. Therefore one is not surprised to hear Gratiano, the merriest man in Venice, say: —

Gratiano. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world;
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.
Antonio. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.
Gratiano. Let *me* play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes? and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio, —
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks, —
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit, —
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"
O, my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing; who, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I 'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not with this melancholy bait,
For this fool's gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well, a while;
I 'll end my exhortation after dinner.

When Gratiano and Lorenzo take their leave Antonio turns sadly to his friend and kinsman, with the question, —

Is that anything, now?

Bassanio. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day to find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

We quite agree with Bassanio's estimate of Gratiano's volubility, albeit Gratiano has a great deal more than two grains of sense in his bushel of chaff. He has been simply arguing on false premises. What he says does not in the least apply to Antonio. Some one says his lecture to Antonio in this place recalls Landseer's "Dignity and Impudence."

An application to a rich kinsman for money is not generally a graceful or becoming proceeding; but Bassanio does it without impairing his dignity or gentlemanhood. It is harder for a nature of high order to ask a favor than to grant one, but hardest of all to ask it without loss of self-respect, and without too much apology. Bassanio is perfect. It does not usually dispose us in favor of a man that he avowedly seeks to mend his broken fortunes by marrying an heiress, and yet we do not cast this up against Bassanio. He has seen Portia, and loved her, and appreciates her; that is what takes him to Belmont, though he urges only the money consideration on his mercantile friend.

Antonio. Well, tell me now, what lady is this same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?
Bassanio. 'T is not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance.
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is, to come fairly off from the great debts

Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money, and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Antonio. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honor, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

Bassanio. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advisèd watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first

Antonio. You know me well; and herein spend but time,
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong,
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have;
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am pressed unto it. Therefore, speak.

Bassanio. In Belmont is a lady, richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair, speechless messages.
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, — Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast

Renownèd suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O, my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift
That I should, questionless, be fortunate.

Antonio. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Nor have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do.
That shall be racked, e'en to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make
To have it of my trust, or for my sake.

Scene 2.

We next stand within the marble halls of Belmont, where Portia, the rich woman, is (like Antonio, the rich man) professing herself melancholy. Nerissa, her lady-in-waiting, is quick-witted, kindly, and deeply attached to the sweet heiress, but throughout we feel her inferiority of nature to be greater than her inferiority of position. Hear them talking to one another. Nerissa is trying much the same style of comfort as Salarino and Salanio have tried with Antonio.

Portia. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Nerissa. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing.

Portia. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Nerissa. They would be better if well followed.

Portia. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces.

It is a good divine that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me an husband. O, me! — the word *choose!* I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike. So is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Nerissa. Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations. Therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead (whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you), will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Portia. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them I will describe them; and according to my description level my affection.

Nerissa. First, there is the Neapolitan Prince.

Portia. Ay, that 's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself.

Nerissa. Then is there the County Palatine.

Portia. He does nothing but frown; as who should say, "An if you will not have me, choose;" he hears merry tales, and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Nerissa. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Portia. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker; but he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering; he will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Nerissa. What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

Portia. You know, I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him. He hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor penny-worth in the English. He is a proper man's picture. But, alas! who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere.

Nerissa. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

Portia. That he hath a neighborly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able. I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

Nerissa. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Portia. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon when he is drunk. When he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast; an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Nerissa. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Portia. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a spunge.

Nerissa. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit; unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Portia. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Nerissa. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Portia. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

Nerissa. True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Portia. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

How charming is Portia's description of her Neapolitan, Rhineland, French, English, Scottish, and German suitors. How their national peculiarities are touched off in a few words, especially those of the Englishman. Surely we know him, — especially such of us as have lived upon the European Continent (and we see him sometimes in our own country, although *here* he has the advantage of being able to speak the national tongue), — a handsome man, conspicuous by his ill-assorted dress, with a dash of behavior "caught up from everywhere," prompt with his fists, but a laggard with his tongue. The catalogue is interrupted by the necessity of going forward to receive more suitors.

Scene 3.

In this scene we return to Venice, and see Bassanio and the usurer Shylock in conference concerning the loan of three thousand ducats, to be made in Antonio's name for Bassanio's uses. Though a scholar and soldier, well born and well-bred, Bassanio has to keep a civil tongue in his head while talking to Shylock, — nay, he even asks him to dine with him.

Shylock. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bassanio. Your answer to that.

Shylock. Antonio is a good man

Bassanio. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shylock. Ho! no, no, no, no; my meaning in saying he is a *good* man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his

means are in supposition. He hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies. I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third in Mexico, a fourth in England, — and other ventures he hath squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats, and water-rats, water-thieves, and land-thieves, — I mean, pirates; and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats, — I think I may take his bond.

Bassanio. Be assured you may.

Shylock. I *will* be assured I may; and that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bassanio. If it please you to dine with us.

Shylock. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? — Who is he comes here?

[*Enter Antonio.*

Bassanio. This is Signior Antonio.

Shylock [*aside*]. How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him, for he is a Christian;
But more, for that, in low simplicity,
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursèd be my tribe
If I forgive him!

Bassanio. Shylock, do you hear?

Shylock. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft; how many months
Do you desire?

Here he turns suddenly to Antonio, whose entrance he has affected not to perceive, being absorbed in calculation, and greets him fawningly, —

Rest you fair, good Signior.
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
Antonio. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I 'll break a custom. [*To Bassanio.*] Is he yet possessed
How much you would?
Shylock. Ay, ay; three thousand ducats.
Antonio. And for three months.
Shylock. I had forgot; three months, you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and — let me see. . . .
Three thousand ducats, — 't is a good round sum.
Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate.
Antonio. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to you?
Shylock. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto, you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances;
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe;
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat, dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine, —
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to, then. You come to me and you say,
"Shylock, we would have moneys." You say so, —
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.
What shall I say to you? Should I not say
"Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key
With bated breath, and whispering humbleness,
Say this? —
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last,
You spurned me such a day; another time

You called me — dog; and for these courtesies
I 'll lend you thus much moneys."
Antonio. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends (for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?)
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break, thou may'st with better face
Exact the penalty.
Shylock. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you 'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.
Antonio. This were kindness.
Shylock. This kindness will I show:—
Go with me to a notary; seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.
Antonio. Content, in faith: I 'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
Bassanio. You shall not seal to such a bond for me;
I 'll rather dwell in my necessity.
Antonio. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it;
Within these two months, that 's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.
Shylock. O father Abraham, what these Christians are;
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,

Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favor I extend this friendship.
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And for my love, I pray you, wrong me not.
Antonio. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.
Shylock. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently
I will be with you. [*Exit.*
Antonio. Hie thee, gentle Jew.
This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.
Bassanio. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind.
Antonio. Come on; in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.

We here see why Shylock has so deep a hatred to Antonio, who in truth treats him with far less consideration than he receives from Bassanio.

It is curious, in looking over the commentaries of the German Gervinus on this play, to see how the German hatred of the Jew comes out. All through Russia, Polish Prussia, and Eastern Europe, hatred to Jews, even in this day, seems mediæval. Among ourselves there are plenty of great and good Jews, — Jews who by their extraordinary intellectual activity and tribal influence rise to the highest places. Indeed, it is said that the real balance of power in Europe is now in the hands of Jews. Within little more than a generation, Disraeli in England and Crémieux in France have conducted the destinies of those two great countries. Has it ever occurred to you that there are two miracles that we can witness still? We can see the Greek taught by miracle to the Apostles Peter, James, Jude, and John (rude fishermen

upon an inland sea), on the first Whitsunday; and with our own eyes we can witness any day the fulfilment of those prophecies in Deuteronomy uttered by Moses against his countrymen, preserved by Jews themselves for the strengthening of the Church's faith, and handed down to us ungarbled from generation to generation. These prophecies, besides predicting the unnatural position occupied for eighteen centuries by the most intellectual nation upon earth, with all its wrongs and all its sorrows, tell us how utterly separate among all nations the Jews shall remain. It is not that they wish to be so separated; a Jew prefers to call himself an American or an Englishman; but let us walk down any of the shopping streets of a great city, and we shall see prophecy fulfilled in the faces of the little children who play outside their fathers' clothing-stores, while looking out for customers. It is the standing miracle, — the one we may always mentally refer to whenever a doubt of the inspiration of the Bible flashes across our minds. Could human reasoning have foretold this isolation, in the days before Greece was civilized, or the Fall of Troy was sung? Was it capable of predicting that the nation the most intellectual should be, by common consent among all peoples, the most degraded and oppressed; that a nation dispersed among all other nations should preserve its national type, when, as we see among ourselves, in two generations German, Irish, or Scotch immigrants' children become wholly Americanized — even to American hands and feet? Is it not phenomenal that the nation having the oldest records known to history, — the nation that preserved for our use all that is most cherished by civilized Christendom; that gave us the characters we have revered from infancy, the men and women whose

stories have been familiar to us from our very cradles; the people our Lord loved with a patriot's love; the nation for whose welfare Saint Paul would have been willing to risk all that was most dear to him; the people whom we believe shall be regrafted into the Church, and held in highest honor among men, — that *this* nation should be what we know the Jews have been, and are, and that all this should have been minutely prophesied, and that prophecy preserved for us by the Jews themselves? What is this but a *miracle?* We may remark too that the two greatest English writers have been (may I say *inspired?*) to show us the full extent of this miracle by depicting for us the Jew, — Shakspeare in Shylock, and Scott in Isaac of York.

True as are Shylock's descriptions of the way Jews were treated (and are still treated in Eastern Europe), great men do not seem to have been sharers in that wrong. Shakspeare's scorn of Shylock is for what he is as a man; he pleads for him by implication as a Jew; Scott's view is the same; Dante never spake one word against the Jews, though he lived in mediæval Italy; Charlemagne confided in them; and Cromwell, contrary to the spirit of his times, permitted them to settle freely in Puritan England.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

We must pass over the scene concerning the Prince of Morocco, the worthiest of Portia's princely suitors, and I fear we must also omit that delightful comic soliloquy in the second scene, where Launcelot Gobbo debates within himself whether he can in conscience run from, or remain with the Jew his master. Just as he has decided to break his engagement, his old father comes in, and does not recognize

his loutish son in the smart Venetian valet, who looks to him like a gentleman. I think that only those who have seen this scene played by appreciative actors can estimate its full effect.

Gobbo. Master, young man, you, I pray you; which is the way to master Jew's?

Launcelot [*aside*]. O heavens, this is my true begotten father! — who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not; I will try conclusions with him.

Gobbo. Master, young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Launcelot. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gobbo. By God's sonties, 't will be a hard way to hit; can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him, or no?

Launcelot. Talk you of young master Launcelot? Mark me now [*aside*]; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gobbo. No master, sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

Launcelot. Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young master Launcelot.

Gobbo. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Launcelot. But I pray you *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you; talk you of young master Launcelot.

Gobbo. Of Launcelot, an 't please your mastership.

Launcelot. *Ergo*, master Launcelot; talk not of master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings; the sisters three, and such branches of learning) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say, in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gobbo. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Launcelot. Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gobbo. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman; but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy (God rest his soul!) alive, or dead?

Launcelot. Do you not know me, father?

Gobbo. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind, I know you not.

Launcelot. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me; it is a wise father that knows his own child; well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. Give *me* your blessing; truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long, a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

Gobbo. Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Launcelot. Pray you, let 's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing; I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gobbo. I cannot think you are my son.

Launcelot. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and, I am sure, Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gobbo. Her name is Margery, indeed; I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my thill-horse has on his tail.

Launcelot. It should seem then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair on his tail than I have on my face, when I last saw him.

Gobbo. Lord, how art thou changed! how dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present; how 'gree you now?

Launcelot. Well; well; but for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I would not rest till I have run some ground. My master 's a very Jew; give *him* a present? give him a halter! I am famished in his service. You may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come. Give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who indeed gives rare new liveries. Oh, rare fortune, here comes the man; to him, father!

They proffer their suit and their present of doves to Bassanio, who readily accepts Launcelot, and orders him the desired new suit of "rare livery."

Next we see Gratiano begging Bassanio to take him with him to Belmont; one understands Bassanio's spendthriftness, for he never can refuse a request from anybody.

Gratiano. I have a suit to you.
Bassanio. You have obtained it.
Gratiano. You must not deny me; I must go with you to Belmont.
Bassanio. Why then, you must; but hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;
Parts, that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behavior,
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.
Gratiano. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely, —
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say, amen, —
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, — never trust me more.
Bassanio. Well, we shall see your bearing.
Gratiano. Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gage me
By what we do to-night.
Bassanio. No, that were pity;
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment; but fare you well,
I have some business.
Gratiano. And I must to Lorenzo, and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

Scene 3.

In this play we have three lovers, and three ladies, — Portia and Bassanio; Jessica and Lorenzo; Nerissa and Gratiano. Jessica one would think (*à priori*) could not be charming; she is the disobedient daughter of a fierce old usurer, brought up in a home which she tells us was a hell, — among

all that was sordid and unlovely; and yet she is a very pearl; dear, too, to the hearts of those Baltimoreans who saw her personated in private theatricals by the daughter of a judge high in the esteem of his fellow-townsmen. Alas! that impersonation of winning lovely, innocence is now only a memory. There is a soft confidingness in Jessica which would lead the way to grief if Lorenzo were no true man; and she seems all the time to be running a fearful risk in trusting him so absolutely, as she really knows but little of him. Her first appearance is with Launcelot, her father's serving-man.

Jessica. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest.
Give him this letter; do it secretly,
And so farewell; I would not have my father
See me talk with thee.

Launcelot. Adieu! — tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful Pagan, — most sweet Jew! If a Christian do not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceived. But adieu! these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit. Adieu! [*Exit.*

Jessica. Farewell, good Launcelot.
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife;
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

Scene 4.

This scene shows us preparations for Bassanio's bachelor banquet, and Lorenzo's arrangements for carrying off Jessica.

Scene 5.

Next we see Shylock going forth to Bassanio's supper-party, and giving Jessica charge of his keys in his absence. Stewart Newton, a Boston artist of great promise, who died young, as he was rising to great fame in England, took for the subject of nearly all his pictures this Jewish Jessica. One of them — Jessica demurely receiving from her father the great keys — is well known and very celebrated.

Shylock. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica.
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me.
But yet I 'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. I am right loath to go;
There is some ill a brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Launcelot. I beseech you, sir, go, my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shylock. So do I his.

Launcelot. And they have conspired together, — I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on Black-Monday last, at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

Shylock. What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica;
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squeaking of the wry-necked fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street,
To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces:
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements;
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Launcelot. I will go before, sir.
Mistress, look out at window, for all this ;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.
[*Exit Launcelot.*

Shylock. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha ?

Jessica. His words were, Farewell, mistress ; nothing else.

Shylock. The patch is kind enough ; but a huge feeder,
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat ; drones hive not with me ;
Therefore I part with him ; and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrowed purse. Well, Jessica, go in ;
Perhaps I will return immediately.
Do as I bid you ;
Shut doors after you : " Fast bind, fast find," —
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jessica. Farewell ; and if my fortune be not crossed,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit.*

Launcelot's proverbial expression, " will be worth a Jewess' eye," contains a popular reminiscence of those frightful days when Jews were made willing to ransom their eyes and teeth from the cruelty of Christians.

Scene 6.

In the sixth scene we see pretty Jessica in her page's dress, ashamed of her false manliness far more than of carrying off her father's jewels ; there is nothing Oriental about Jessica but her lavishness ; her very expressions are mediæval, or drawn from classical literature.

Jessica. Who are you ? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I 'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lorenzo. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jessica. Lorenzo, certain ; and my love, indeed ;
For who love I so much ? And now who knows,
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours ?

Lorenzo. Heaven, and thy thoughts, are witness that thou art.

Jessica. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 't is night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange.
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformèd to a boy.
Lorenzo. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.
Jessica. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too, too light.
Why, 't is an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.
Lorenzo. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the run-away,
And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.
Jessica. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit, from above.*
Gratiano. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.
Lorenzo. Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

Scene 7.

Here we have the final choice of the Prince of Morocco. What must not Portia have felt as he laid his hand upon the leaden casket? Having lost he takes an abrupt leave with a sore heart, but with dignity.

Scene 8.

Salarino and Salanio tell of Bassanio's embarkation for his brief voyage, and of the Jew's despair on the discovery of his loss.

Salanio. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
"My daughter! — O, my ducats! — O, my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! — O, my Christian ducats! —
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter —
And jewels; two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! — Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!"
Salarino. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, — his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.
Salanio. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.
Salarino. Marry, well remembered.
I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, — in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country, richly fraught.
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wished in silence that it were not his.
Salanio. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.
Salarino. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part.
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return. He answered: "Do not so;
Slur not thy business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time.
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love.
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there."
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection, wondrous sensible,
He wrung Bassanio's hand, and so they parted.
Salanio. I think he only loves the world for him.

The description Salarino gives of Antonio's parting with Bassanio is very touching. He seems to feel so much sympathy in his young friend's love, that (combined with other indications) I am led to think Antonio was a widower.

Scene 9.

The Prince of Aragon chooses the silver casket. Morocco departed in sorrow; the Prince of Aragon takes his leave with subdued indignation. Just as he departs, and Nerissa has remarked that "wiving goes by destiny," Bassanio's arrival is announced, to the open delight of Nerissa and the subdued joy of Portia.

ACT III. *Scene* 1.

We are back again in Venice, Salarino and Salanio are talking about Antonio's ship, which has been wrecked upon the English Goodwin Sands, when they are joined by Shylock. They do not conceal from him that they took some part in his daughter's flight. His first suspicion had fallen on this band of gay young gentlemen; he had searched Bassanio's ship, assisted personally by the Duke himself, and Salarino, Salanio, and the rest, — all friends to Antonio.

Salarino, after badgering the unhappy and bereaved old man, says: "But tell us, Shylock, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea, or no?"

Shylock. There I have another bad match, — a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dares scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that used to come so smug upon the mart: let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me usurer, — let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for Christian courtesy, — let him look to his bond.

Salarino. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh; What 's that good for?

Shylock. To bait fish withal; if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me of half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what 's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? — fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Here the two gentlemen are called away to speak with Antonio; and Tubal, a second Jewish usurer, enters with news of Jessica. So obviously is the Jew's grief for his ducats and his jewels, rather than for his daughter, that our sympathy, moved by the glowing passion in his last speech, is turned against him.

Shylock. How now, Tubal? What news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

Tubal. I often came where I did hear of her, but never found her.

Shylock. Why there, there, there, there! A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now. I never felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so, — and I know not what 's spent in the search! Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief! And no satisfaction, no revenge; nor no ill-luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

Tubal. Yes, other men have ill-luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa, —

Shylock. What! what! what! — Ill luck? Ill luck?

Tubal. — hath an argosy cast away coming from Tripolis.

Shylock. I thank God! I thank God! Is it true? Is it true?

Tubal. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shylock. I thank thee, good Tubal. Good news, good news! Ha, ha! Where? — in Genoa?

Tubal. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night fourscore ducats.

Shylock. Thou stick'st a dagger in me, — I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tubal. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shylock. I am very glad of it. I 'll plague him; I 'll torture him; I am glad of it.

Tubal. One of them showed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shylock. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal; it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tubal. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shylock. Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

Well may an old magazine writer on this play, call Shylock's confidant, the "cruel Tubal." He is wolfish towards Antonio, and tears open Shylock's wounds with cruel fangs, the moment he appears to be forgetting them.

Scene 2.

This is the crowning scene of the whole play, — Bassanio's choice of the right casket. We see the difference between high-souled, well-nurtured Portia, and poor little Jessica. Portia, though she confesses to Bassanio her love, will give him no hint as to his choice, remaining loyal to the wishes

of her dead father. But she puts trust in Him who rules the choice. Hear her sweet speech while soft music is being played, and the man she loves is choosing for her happiness or misery.

> Let music sound, while he doth make his choice;
> Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
> Fading in music; that the comparison
> May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
> And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
> And what is music then? then music is
> Even as the flourish, when true subjects bow
> To a new-crownèd monarch; such it is
> As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
> That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
> And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
> With no less presence, but with much more love,
> Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
> The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
> To the sea-monster. I stand for sacrifice;
> The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
> With blearèd visages, come forth to view
> The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
> Live thou, I live. With much, much more dismay
> I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.

And when his choice is fortunate, hear her delight: —

> *Portia.* How all the other passions fleet to air,
> As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
> And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy.
> O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy,
> In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess;
> I feel too much thy blessing, make it less,
> For fear I surfeit!

Then comes that noble speech in which she gives herself away to him who has won her. Pray Heaven that Bassanio be worthy of his prize! There have been women who gave

themselves and all they had and were, with as full hearts, and with as generous impulses as Portia. And there have been ungenerous Bassanios who simply looked on wifely service and on wifely wealth as a cold right, — the legal product of an advantageous marriage. I can never bear to think how it might be with Portia if she met with no fitting response to her love and generosity. If her full trust in her soldier and scholar were to meet with disappointment, how would she adjust herself to the burden she would have to bear? "For perfect womanly grace," says one, "for simple feeling, coming from a heart too pure and true to be troubled by false shame, where shall we match Portia's self-surrender? Where she gives her heart, she gives all besides, freely, entirely, delighting in it, counting everything too small to be reckoned a sacrifice for love, and rejoicing at the thought of resigning herself into better hands than her own."

Portia. You see me, lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am; though, for myself alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wish
To wish myself much better, yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high on your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of something; which, to term in gross,
Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised.
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; and happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is, that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours

Is now converted; but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring,
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

The strain of this exalted feeling is broken in upon by Gratiano, who announces his engagement to Nerissa. It is commonly considered that this was a mad-cap match, made up in great haste and without consideration, but I think not. Gratiano had been very solicitous to accompany Bassanio to Belmont, and I doubt not had been there before, and known Nerissa, and contracted a fancy for her, even as Bassanio had fallen in love with Portia. Nerissa is a lady-in-waiting, but is somewhat kitchen-minded. She keeps her native coarseness in check when conversing with Portia; but it breaks out in her intercourse with Gratiano.

And now while congratulations are being exchanged, and happiness seems complete, bad news is brought by a Venetian messenger, Salerio, accompanied by Lorenzo and Jessica, of the overthrow of Antonio's fortunes; "his ventures have failed, the time has gone by when the bond could be redeemed, and nothing can drive the inexorable Jew from the envious pleas of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond." The first things Portia has to share with her Bassanio are trouble and perplexity.

Portia. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steal the color from Bassanio's cheek.
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse? — and worse? —

With leave, Bassanio ; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.
Bassanio. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasantest words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true. And yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady, —
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit? —
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one vessel 'scaped the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?
Salerio. Not one, my lord;
Besides, it should appear that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the Duke at morning, and at night;
And doth impeach the freedom of the state
If they deny him justice; twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.
Jessica. When I was with him, I have heard him swear,
To Tubal, and to Chus, his countrymen,

That he would rather have Antonio's flesh,
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,
If law, authority, and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Portia. Is it your dear friend, that is thus in trouble?

Bassanio. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best conditioned, and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honor more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Portia. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bassanio. For me, three thousand ducats.

Portia. What! no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond.
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through lord Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend.
. . . You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over.
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day;
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;
Since you are dear-bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bassanio [*reads*]. "Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried; my creditors grown cruel; my estate is very low; my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure. If your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter."

Portia. O love! despatch all business, and be gone!

Bassanio had evidently dismissed his passing apprehension of danger to his friend under the terms of the Jew's bond, "and now he awakens to that fact in an agony between love

for his friend and remorse at having injured him. Characteristically, Portia wastes no words till she has grasped the facts of the case; then she comes to the rescue with a superb indifference to the cost. She is only delighted that it is possible to save Antonio by such a poor thing as money. She sees at once what Bassanio ought to do, with loving tact makes it all easy for him, and sends him off without delay."

Scene 3.

Here we see Antonio in his lowest abasement. He has humbled himself to ask mercy from his creditor. He has persuaded his jailer to let him go forth in his company, that he may make one last appeal to the fierce usurer, whom, whether for good or for evil, he never has understood, and never could. Though Antonio's disposition is despondent, life is still sweet to him. The motive of Shylock's enmity to this good man is again and again set before us. The Christian had interfered with the Jew's business. He had rescued hapless debtors from his grasp ere he could squeeze from them their last coin. He had lent money to the poor at rates that shamed the dealings of the usurer. This is the *ground* of hatred, but upon it have accumulated other reasons for hate. Antonio's scorn of Shylock as a hard bad man and a misbeliéver, his possible connivance in the flight of Jessica, the delight of demanding Christian justice upon one who had despised and loathed his suffering nation in the days of his wealth and his prosperity, lead the triumphant Jew exultingly to trust in that adherence to law which had already led the highest officer of Venice to assist him in his search through the holds and cabins of the gay pleasure-

boat of Bassanio. Listen to poor Antonio, as he enters the Valley of Humiliation: —

Antonio. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shylock. I 'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;
I have sworn an oath, that I will have my bond.
Thou calledst me dog, before thou hadst a cause.
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.
Antonio. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shylock. I 'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak.
I 'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I 'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I 'll have no speaking; I will have my bond.
[*Exit Shylock.*
Salanio. It is the most impenetrable cur,
That ever kept with men.
Antonio. Let him alone,
I 'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know;
I oft delivered from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

Scene 4.

Bassanio being gone, Portia is left in Belmont to share the company of Jessica. Jessica, on the first arrival of the news of Antonio's situation, had spoken out boldly concerning her father's hatred to Antonio, and his probable determination to exact the forfeiture provided for in the bond; but Portia knew not then who she might be, and paid little attention to her; *now*, left alone with her new guest, she knows her, hears, and fears. With the fear rises a plan. She will go to

Padua, and impart it to her cousin Bellario; he shall say if it is practicable; he shall use it to defend Antonio. She and Nerissa will accompany him, dressed up as lawyers' clerks, and see the scene, and greet their husbands. She is brimming over with mirth at the thought; you can see that in her soul she is thinking of the triumph and the "fun." Of the awful responsibility that is awaiting her, of the Jew's obduracy, of his refusal of her money when she tenders it, she has no suspicion. She has been all her life accustomed to independent action; and (unaccustomed yet to any matrimonial yoke) she will be independent now. She had been melancholy when the play opened; she is all frolic since she was won by the right lover. Gervinus, the German critic, thinks that Portia has a deliberate plan of proving Bassanio's worth of character by seeing how he will act in friendship, and thence arguing how he will act in marriage. Fie on the man who would attribute calculation of any kind to Portia!

She sends her husband off in haste, confident that double money (or twenty times double money) will buy the Jew; then she begins to fear, under the influence of Jessica, and plans that Bellario shall undertake the case, she and Nerissa attending him. Bellario, while he approves her plan, proves too sick to go to Venice. She begins to feel the case more and more pressing. Encouraged by Bellario, she takes the part of advocate, and reaches Venice, no longer full of the spirit of fun, but weighted with a dreadful responsibility; and she is but just in time. She evidently is familiar with the ordinary machinery of law courts. Her heart and head are so full of her mission that, bride as she is, she hardly notices her husband. But this is anticipating. Hear what Lorenzo says of Antonio, and Jessica of Portia: —

Lorenzo. Madame, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honor,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord, your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Portia. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it.

Scene 5.

Lorenzo. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the lord Bassanio's wife?

Jessica. Past all expressing. It is very meet,
The lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And, if on earth he do not mean it, it
Is reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawned with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Act IV. *Scene* 1.

And now we enter on the trial-scene. Antonio, having in vain humbled himself to ask the Jew's forbearance, stands "opposing patience to his fury, armed to suffer with quietness of spirit."

Not one word can be spared in this great scene; but let us first see what other writers have said of it.

"The Duke sweeps in," says one, "stately and venerable. [We imagine him to be an old man, though nothing is said about it.] He is sorry for Antonio; he is willing to try to move Shylock, but at the same time he is resolved upon upholding the justice of his government. Then Antonio, having got his one wish of seeing Bassanio before his death, has steadied himself into a great calm. He is hopeless; but he is resolute to bear the worst with manly endurance. Only one thing he seems to dread, — any prolonging of the trial. Nearly all he says expresses his wish to expedite matters, and end the terrible suspense. Antonio can be resigned for himself, but Bassanio cannot attempt to be so for him, — no wonder, under the circumstances. . . . He is naturally too quick and 'soldier-like' to reason or care about the principles of legal justice in the face of this misery. He wants to save Antonio anyhow. . . . If he forgot Antonio's risk during his suit to Portia, now he would even lose Portia, if Antonio might thereby be saved. From head to heel he seems to tingle with suppressed excitement, which in a lesser degree is shared by Gratiano, who, with all his ribaldry and recklessness, is really attached to Antonio, and feels keenly for him; though the feeling mainly expresses itself in fierce contempt for Shylock. Opposed to the group of friends stands the

Jew himself, striving to control his stormy passions so far as to be able to state his case coherently; but we feel he is on the point of bursting out all the time, which adds greatly to the thrilling effect of the whole scene. He is almost beside himself with exultation at the revenge which he deems certain, — at the prospect of quickly gratifying his long-cherished desire. His fear of the Duke's authority barely suffices to check the insolence of his triumph, even when directly speaking to him. To the rest of the audience his whole tone is, 'I am not bound to please *thee* with my answers.' . . .

"Hard, relentless, intensely bitter, — every evil passion displayed in his frantic eagerness as he stands before us, — we see why Shylock's name has grown into a proverb for that worst form of injustice which clings to the letter of the law, disregarding its spirit, and after trampling on every sacred right and duty, turns round and asks of heaven and earth, 'What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?'"

Lady Martin (Miss Helen Faucit) says that the Duke's first speech to Shylock shows great want of tact, and is calculated to irritate him. "Who likes it to be taken for granted," she says, "that he is going to do a good action? — to be told that it is expected of him? Such an appeal would be likely to make even a gentle nature perverse. The treatment of the Jew by the friends of Antonio is also little calculated to bend him from his purpose. It would only, if possible, harden his heart still more."

Here is his answer to the Duke, spiced with grim humor. Before I saw Schlegel's remark, that "in Shylock's speeches we can imagine we hear a sprinkling of Jewish pronunciation in the written words," the same idea had struck me. It is most noticeable in his first interview with Antonio and

Bassanio; and I fancied I could detect Germanisms, as if Shakspeare had studied his Shylock from some German Jew.

Shylock. I have possessed your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter, and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I 'll not answer that,
But say it is my humor. Is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are, love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat.
. . . Affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes, or loathes. Now, for your answer.
As there is no firm reason to be rendered
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless, necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate, and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?
Bassanio. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.
Shylock. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.
Bassanio. Do all men kill the things they do not love?
Shylock. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?
Bassanio. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shylock. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?
Antonio. I pray you, think you question with the Jew;
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb?

You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which what 's harder?)
His Jewish heart. Therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.
Bassanio. For thy three thousand ducats, here is six.
Shylock. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them, I would have my bond.
Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?
Shylock. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses, and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer,
The slaves are ours. So do I answer you.
The pound of flesh which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought, is mine, and I will have it!
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment. Answer; shall I have it?

At this point Portia and Nerissa arrive, sent by Bellario, who is too ill to come.

In acting, the malice and impatience expressed by Shylock's whetting his knife on the sole of his shoe, while Portia is speaking, acts with tremendous power on the imagination. Shylock's retaliation on Gratiano for his fierce abuse, by insulting him with the epithet "good youth," is admirable. Portia begins, after delivering her credentials, to soothe the

Jew, whom she desires to soften, acknowledging at once that he has the law on his side. She gives up the indefensible in her defence that she may better move the Jew to mercy.

As this is one of the most celebrated scenes in Shakspeare it seems right to give it here almost entire. In reading it mark Portia's persistent attempts to guide the Jew into the paths of mercy, so that she may have some excuse for simply paying him, and so ending the case happily. Suggestion after suggestion on her part he puts aside, as she does subsequently suggestion after suggestion upon his. It is not until after Antonio's pathetic speech, to which the Jew listens without emotion, that Portia's anger blazes forth against him.

Portia. Do you confess the bond?
Antonio. I do.
Portia. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shylock. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Portia. The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'T is mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown.
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this, —
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation; we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;

Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.
Shylock. My deed 's upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
Portia. Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bassanio. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum; if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart;
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you
Wrest once the law to your authority.
To do a great right, do a little wrong;
And curb this cruel devil of his will.
Portia. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established.
'T will be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.
Shylock. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel! —
O wise young judge, how do I honor thee!
Portia. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shylock. Here 't is, most reverend doctor, here it is!
Portia. Shylock, there 's thrice thy money offered thee.
Shylock. An oath! an oath! I have an oath in heaven.
Shall I lay perjury to my soul?
No! not for Venice.
Portia. Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shylock. When it is paid according to the tenor.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law; your exposition
Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

Antonio. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.
Portia. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife;
Shylock. O, noble judge! O, excellent young man!
Portia. — for the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shylock. 'T is very true. O, wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Portia. Therefore, lay bare your bosom.
Shylock. Ay, his heart,
So says the bond, — doth it not, noble judge?
Nearest his heart; those are the very words.
Portia. It is so. Are there balances here to weigh
The flesh?
Shylock. I have them ready.
Portia. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shylock. Is it so nominated in the bond?
Portia. It is not so expressed. But what of that?
'T were good you do so much for charity.
Shylock. I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond.
Portia. Come, merchant, have you anything to say?
Antonio. But little; I am armed and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio. Fare you well;
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom. It is still her use,
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honorable wife.
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you; speak me fair in death;
And when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I 'll pay it instantly with all my heart.
Bassanio. Antonio, I am married to a wife,
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife and all the world,
Are not with me esteemed above thy life.
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
Portia. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.
Gratiano. I have a wife, whom I protest I love.
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
Nerissa. 'T is well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.
Shylock [*aside*]. These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Bar-Abbas
Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!
We trifle time; I pray thee, pursue sentence.
Portia. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine;
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shylock. Most rightful judge!
Portia. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast;
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shylock. Most learned judge! A sentence; come, prepare!
Portia. Tarry a little, — there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh.
Take then thy bond, take then thy pound of flesh,
But in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the State of Venice.
Gratiano. O upright judge! Mark, Jew! — O learnèd judge!
Shylock. Is that the law?
Portia. Thyself shalt see the act;
For as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gratiano. O learnèd judge! Mark, Jew! — A learnèd judge!
Shylock. I take this offer then; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

Bassanio. Here is the money!
Portia. Soft. The Jew shall have all justice. Soft, no haste;
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Observe that the principals in the court-room, touched by compassion for the baffled wretch now at their mercy, do not exult over him; they leave that to their underling, Gratiano.

The sentence seems severe, but it was for conspiring against the life of a Venetian citizen. All Shylock's wealth is forfeited, half to the State, half to Antonio, and his life is at the Duke's mercy. But, moved by Portia's plea for mercy which yet rings in their ears, they show to Shylock what they doubtless consider an extreme lenity and consideration. The Duke grants him his life; and when Portia, turning to Antonio, asks what he will do for his enemy, he pleads to the Duke for the restoration of all his property, on the condition that he may hold half in trust for Lorenzo and Jessica, and that a deed of gift may be at once recorded to Lorenzo and Jessica of all that Shylock may die possessed of. Added to this, Antonio is disposed to exact his baptism as a Christian. Such was the mediæval conception of the virtues of an enforced profession, and such the mediæval want of appreciation of the spirit of Christianity.

Portia refuses any remuneration from the man she has befriended, nor will she accept courtesies from the Duke. She says to Antonio: —

> He is well paid that is well satisfied;
> And I, delivering you, am satisfied,
> And therein do account myself well paid;
> My mind was never yet more mercenary.
> I pray you, know me when we meet again;
> I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Then ensues that pretty scene in which Portia and Nerissa get possession of the rings they gave their husbands; and the great tragic strain being taken off, Portia's blithe nature triumphs, and she is ready for fun again.

Act V. *Scene* 1.

This fifth act would be superfluous were it not added to relieve the mind of reader or spectator, who has found the last act full of tragic incident, and now needs the soothing influences of love, happiness, and romance, dashed with a little lively comedy.

In the first scene, Lorenzo with his stolen Jessica are walking in the moonlight, making the most charming love to each other. In the midst of which a messenger arrives, telling them that Portia is near at hand.

Lorenzo. The moon shines bright; in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise, — in such a night,
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.
Jessica. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew;
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismayed away.
Lorenzo. In such a night
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage.
Jessica. In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.
Lorenzo. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew;
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,
As far as Belmont.

Jessica. And in such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well;
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.
Lorenzo. And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.
Jessica. I would out-night you did nobody come.
But hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Then, as soft music strikes up under the trees, a prelude to the welcome home of Portia, Lorenzo cannot bear to quit the place, and makes his charming love sit longer in the moonlight.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night,
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins.
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
Jessica. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.
[*Music.*
Lorenzo. The reason is, your spirits are attentive.
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood, —
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music. Therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;

Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted.

[*Enter Portia and Nerissa in the distance.*

Portia. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Nerissa. When the moon shone we did not see the candle.

Portia. So doth the greater glory dim the less.
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook,
Into the main of waters.

Here, as a commentary on Portia's last words, pretty Jessica, on her appearance, becomes absolutely silent.

The final scene, with the return of the husbands, the recovery of the two rings, and Portia's graceful welcome of Antonio to "our house," must be regretfully omitted. If you read it, you will note that Nerissa, though decorous when associated with Portia, gives a loose rein to her pert wit when she talks with Gratiano. I hope her husband took her away from Belmont, and that pretty Jessica succeeded to her place as lady-in-waiting, to be improved and educated by her intercourse with Portia. As for that sweet lady, may her married life have been a happy one; but I wish she had married Antonio. As old Nestor says, when he hears in the dark the tramp of horses, —

"I hope, and yet I fear."

CYMBELINE.

CYMBELINE.

HAZLITT says of "Cymbeline" that it may be considered a dramatic romance, in which the most striking parts of the story are thrown into the form of dialogue, and the intermediate circumstances are explained by the different speakers as occasion renders it necessary. "The reading of this play," he adds, "is like going a journey with some uncertain object at the end of it, in which the suspense is kept up and heightened by the long intervals between each action."

The central figure of the play is Imogen, Princess of Britain, — the brightest example in all literature of perfect wifehood and true womanhood.

While never forgetful of her dignity as a princess, and of her obligations to her kingdom, Imogen's whole being is "bound up in the bundle of life" with that of her husband and lord. "In her," says Mrs. Jameson, "a variety of tints are mingled together with perfect harmony. In her we have all the fervor of youthful tenderness, all the romance of youthful fancy, all the enchantment of ideal grace, the bloom of beauty, the brightness of intellect, and the dignity of rank, taking a peculiar hue from the conjugal character which is shed over all like a consecration. . . . Imogen, throughout the play, is an angel of light, whose lovely presence pervades and animates the whole piece."

"Cymbeline" is one of those plays of Shakspeare — the others being the "Winter's Tale" and "The Merchant of Venice" — where the path of the story leads us along the very verge of tragedy. Throughout "Cymbeline" there is nothing that can properly be called comic; everything moves us to pity, or rouses us to apprehension.

It has never been a popular acting-play, and that from several causes. The main incident of the story is not pleasing; and subtle as the distinctions of character are among the minor personages, there are no star-parts in it for male actors. The part of Imogen needs a lady of exceptional refinement. It was one of Miss Helen Faucit's favorite characters; but when will the public look upon her like again?

The story is founded on a tale of Boccaccio's in the "Decamerone." There Imogen is Zinevra, wife of a rich gentleman of Genoa. The circumstances of the bet, and of the treachery of Iachimo are the same; but then the story wanders into all sorts of improbabilities, and in the end Zinevra and her husband are made wealthy and happy by a decree of the Soldan of Egypt, who bestows on them the riches of Ambroglio (the Iachimo), while the unfortunate man is smeared with honey, and left in the sun to be stung to death by flies, — apparently to the satisfaction of the prototype of Imogen.

Shakspeare has not taken contemporary Italian life as a setting for his story; he has put it back into the poet's fairy-land, while it pretends to be founded on semi-historical facts. The scene is in the Land of the Round Table and the Grail, but the date is that of the last days of Roman rule in Britain; the religion is semi-pagan, and the manners have not yet caught the tone of Christian chivalry.

In the folio edition of Shakspeare, printed in 1623, "Cymbeline" is placed among the tragedies, and for that reason is still so numbered by many modern editors. It is less a tragedy, however, than "The Winter's Tale," which contains two deaths, — that of Antigonus and little Mamillius, heir-apparent to the Sicilian throne. Cymbeline, King of Britain, is mentioned by name by Holinshed, as well as his two sons, Guiderius and Arviragus. The old historian also relates the circumstance of his refusing to pay tribute to Rome.

The scene is partly at the court of Britain, partly among the mountains of South Wales. In its contrasts between the intrigues of a court and the sweet life of woods and streams, it resembles "As you Like It;" but the forest-life in "Cymbeline" is very different from life in the forest of Arden. The deer that Jaques moralized upon are simply "game" to old Belarius and his boys. But Shakspeare knew that life, removed from centres of thought and interest, must and should pall on the ardent and the young. The princely lads are weary of it, sweet as it seems to Imogen, even as in Arden Touchstone assures us "that in respect to country-life being solitary," he likes it "very well, but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. In respect that it is in the fields," he adds, "it pleaseth me well, but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious." The sons of Cymbeline had never been at court, but their hearts beat to the same measure as that of the battered court-fool.

Act I. *Scene* 1.

When the play opens Cymbeline is King of Britain. The history of his court is related by two gentlemen. We are

not told where the court was; possibly at Winchester, perhaps at Cærlyon upon Usk.[1]

The King, who is a weak, opinionated, wife-ridden old man, had been twice married. By his first wife he had had three children, — two boys and Princess Imogen. The boys had been spirited away in infancy, and had disappeared entirely and mysteriously. Some years after his first wife's death, King Cymbeline married a sly and cruel widow, who had one son, Cloten, the child of a former husband. This son it was the object of her life to mate with Princess Imogen, and so raise him to her husband's throne. She probably counted on the imbecility of Cloten to enable her to continue that rule in Britain which she was suffered to usurp by her weak husband. But such a woman as sweet Imogen could not possibly have united herself to such a man as Cloten; nor, as heiress of England, could a woman of her intellect and conscientiousness have been willing to put her people into his power. Besides, she had been brought up during her mother's life-time with a young nobleman of the court, Leonatus Posthumus, who under peculiar circumstances had been adopted by her parents. Posthumus was the son of a nobleman, of distinguished rank and prowess, who, with two older sons, died, sword in hand, in the King's cause. This youngest son was born after his father's death, and cost the life of his mother. He had been surnamed Posthumus, and raised at the court of Britain, where Shakspeare is careful one of his

[1] At Cærlyon, a few months after the publication of the first volume of the "Idylls of the King," an American traveller inquiring for a copy of the poem in the little bookstore of the town, found that the bookseller had ordered no copies from London, having no idea that the work contained anything of local interest which might make it salable.

first speakers should tell us that, though poor, he was a worthy gentleman; that he was —

> A creature such
> As, to seek through the regions of the earth
> For one his like, there would be something failing
> In him that should compare. I do not think
> So fair an outward, and such stuff within,
> Endows a man but he.

The second speaker objects that this praise is too extravagant. "No," answers the other, "I do crush him together, rather than unfold his measure duly." The King, he goes on to say, having taken the babe to his protection, —

> Put him to all the learnings that his time
> Could make him the receiver of; which he took,
> As we do air, fast as 't was ministered; and
> In his spring became a harvest. Lived in court
> (Which rare it is to do) most praised, most loved, —
> A sample to the youngest; to the more mature,
> A glass that feated them; and to the graver,
> A child that guided dotards: to his mistress,
> For whom he now is banished, — her own price
> Proclaims how she esteemed him and his virtue;
> By her election may be truly read
> What kind of man he is.

Thus we gather that from infancy Posthumus had been assigned to Princess Imogen, that their love grew up under the sanction of her father, and doubtless of her mother, now dead, that Posthumus was wise, cultivated, praised, beloved, and to all men a rare example. It is necessary that we should know him thus, for the part he is about to play does not impress us in his favor.

Imogen, when the play opens, has with calm dignity, as befits a princess, put a barrier between herself and Cloten, by marrying the man who has long been acknowledged her

accepted lover. The courtiers all in their hearts approve the step that the heiress of the realm has taken; but the King, stirred up by his wicked wife ("that late he married"), is furious with Imogen. He banishes Posthumus, and places Imogen in the custody of her step-mother, although, as the courtier who tells the story thinks, "himself much pained at heart."

Scene 2.

The second scene is between the Queen, Imogen the newly-wedded bride, and her banished husband.

The Queen's first words seem kindly, but Imogen knows her too well to trust her kindness, though not an imprudent or impatient word escapes her. The Queen proposes to make Imogen's imprisonment as light as possible, and to be Posthumus's advocate with the King, but meantime thinks he had better absent himself. She then, finding that Posthumus has resolved to quit the court, with false consideration offers to walk apart that the lovers may take their farewell.

Then Imogen, who has not spoken yet, exclaims, —

> O,
> Dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
> Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
> I something fear my father's wrath; but nothing
> (Always reserved my holy duty) what
> His rage can do on me. You must be gone;
> And I shall here abide the hourly shot
> Of angry eyes; not comforted to live,
> But that there is this jewel in the world,
> That I may see again.
> *Posthumus.* My queen! my mistress!
> O, lady, weep no more; lest I give cause
> To be suspected of more tenderness
> Than doth become a man! I will remain
> The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth.

My residence in Rome at one Philario's;
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter; thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I 'll drink the words you send,
Though ink be made of gall.

Here rushes in the Queen, who has been to warn Cymbeline that his daughter and her husband are in forbidden conference. It is hard, very hard to part, and the lovers cling to each other. Imogen says: —

Nay, stay a little.
Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
Such parting were too petty. Look here, love;
This diamond was my mother's: take it, heart;
But keep it till you woo another wife,
When Imogen is dead.
Posthumus. How! how! another? —
You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
And sear up my embracements from a next
With bonds of death! — Remain thou here
[*Putting on the ring.*
While sense can keep it on! And sweetest, fairest,
As I my poor self did exchange for you,
To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles
I still win of you. For my sake, wear this;
It is a manacle of love; I 'll place it
Upon this fairest prisoner.
[*Putting a bracelet on her arm.*
Imogen. O, the gods!
When shall we see again?

Here comes in the King, furious that the pair should be together, and with him are the courtiers. Posthumus is summarily dismissed, but quits the court with dignity. Imogen, when she sees him going, exclaims under her breath, —

There cannot be a pinch in death more sharp
Than this is!

When her father reproaches her, she only begs him to forbear; "For I," she says, "am senseless of your wrath. A touch more rare subdues all pangs, all fears." But she rouses herself when her father says, "Thou wouldst have made my throne a seat for baseness." "No!" she cries, "I rather added a lustre to it."

> Sir, it is your fault I loved Posthumus.
> You bred him as my playfellow, and he is
> A man worth any woman; over-buys me
> Almost the price he pays.

How perfect is Imogen's sense of duty to her father, to her kingdom, to her husband, to herself. She is unmatched in her sweet, sorrowful dignity. "One feels," says Mrs. Jameson, "as if we had known and loved her before she was married to Posthumus, and that her conjugal virtues are a charm superadded, like the color laid upon a beautiful ground-work. We see her love to Posthumus acting on her mind with the force of an habitual feeling, heightened by enthusiastic passion, and hallowed by a sense of duty."

Of the parting scene she says, "Compare it with the parting of Romeo and Juliet, or of Troilus and Cressida; compare the confiding matronly tenderness of Imogen with the despairing agony of Juliet, or the petulant grief of Cressida."

The false Queen then takes up her speech, and with soft, honeyed words pretends to stand as mediatrix between her husband and his child. The passionate, unreasonable, unstable old man flies into a new burst of anger. The make-believe partisanship of his wife was the very thing to rouse him.

Then Pisanio, the servant of Posthumus, enters, having been sent back by his master to watch over Imogen. The Queen,

who has already deep-laid plans of wickedness, endeavors to win him over by her courtesies. The first thing that Pisanio reports is an encounter between the base booby, Cloten, and his master. No harm was done. "My master rather played than fought," says Pisanio, "and had no help of anger." But Imogen, who has not uttered one word on her own behalf, is indignant at this attack on her husband. Still, her speech to Cloten's mother is politic. She has lived too long in a court not to know the mischief that may come from an unruly tongue.

Scene 3.

This scene is in a public place between Cloten and two lords. They are rejoicing in their hearts at his discomfiture, and making covert game of him.

Scene 4.

We have next an interview between Imogen and Pisanio. That worthy retainer has returned from the port, where he has seen his lord put out to sea. Here is his account, given to Imogen, who in a half-hour of retirement has recovered herself.

Imogen. If he should write,
And I not have it, 't were a paper lost,
As offered mercy is. What was the last
That he spake to thee?
Pisanio. 'T was, "His queen, his queen!"
Imogen. Then waved his handkerchief?
Pisanio. And kissed it, madam.
Imogen. Senseless linen! happier therein than I!
And that was all?
Pisanio. No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief,

Still waving, as the fits and stirs of his mind
Could best express how slow his soul sailed on,
How swift his ship.

Imogen. Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.

Pisanio. Madam, so I did.

Imogen. I would have broke mine eye-strings; cracked them, but
To look upon him, till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle;
Nay, followed him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air, and then
Have turned mine eye and wept. But, good Pisanio,
When shall we hear from him?

Pisanio. Be assured, madam,
With his next vantage.

Imogen. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say; ere I could tell him,
How I would think on him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts, and such; or I could make him swear
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest, and his honor; or have charged him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
To encounter me with orisons, for then
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss which I had set
Between two charming words, comes in my father,
And like the tyrannous breathing of the North
Shakes all our buds from growing.

Scene 5.

We next find ourselves in Rome, in the palace of Philario, that friend of his dead father to whom Posthumus had announced his intention to betake himself. The scene is not a pleasant one; but as we read it and see the cunning of the Italian, the insolence of the Frenchman (who, like a Frenchman of his class in our own day, makes a boast of his *bonnes fortunes*), we feel that Posthumus — perfectly confi-

dent of his wife's unassailable purity — is making a protest in favor of good morals, and designs the punishment of the wicked.

When the scene opens, Philario and his friends — Iachimo, the Frenchman, a Hollander, and a Spaniard — are discussing the English milord who has just come to Rome. Iachimo had seen him in Britain, the Frenchman had met him in France, both some years previously. The Frenchman had interfered during their former acquaintance to prevent a duel with another Frenchman, who had excited the young Englishman's wrath by misdoubting his statement that the lady to whom he professed allegiance was "the most fair, virtuous, chaste, well-qualified, and pure of any lady in the world." Posthumus entering, this old question is re-opened. You will note that the name of the lady is never mentioned, though Posthumus says that when he defended her first, he was her friend only, but is now her adorer.

Some critics have wondered why Iachimo put himself so forward in this matter; but I think, first, that he was a needy man; secondly, that he was like some of the men of the Restoration described by Balzac, — a man eager to attempt any enterprise (the more difficult the better), if it would assure him a triumph over a woman's honor.

At any rate, Iachimo makes a coarse bet with Posthumus, of ten thousand golden ducats against his diamond ring, that he will, if furnished with letters to the English court and to the lady in question, in two days secure proofs of her unfaithfulness to her husband. Posthumus, between his teeth, vows that if he fail, *as he will fail*, he shall answer to him with the sword for this insult to his wife. So there are now three motives to make Iachimo persist in succeeding at any

price, — his pecuniary necessities, the thing he calls his honor, and the probability that if he fail he will be sacrificed to the just wrath of the young English husband.

The wager is made; the terms are signed before witnesses, and the money and ring put up, with a little faint remonstrance from Philario.

Scene 6.

We go back again to Britain. The vile Queen dismisses her ladies to gather for her primroses and violets, and has then a secret interview with Cornelius, the court physician. She has asked him to bring her secretly some poisons. He says, presenting her a small box: —

I do beseech your grace (without offence,
My conscience bids me ask) wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death;
But, though slow, deadly?
Queen. I do wonder, doctor,
Thou ask'st me such a question. Have I not been
Thy pupil long? Hast thou not learned me how
To make perfumes? distil? preserve? yea, so,
That our great king himself doth woo me oft
For my confections? Having thus far proceeded,
(Unless thou think'st me devilish) is 't not meet
That I did amplify my judgment in
Other conclusions? I will try the forces
Of these thy compounds on such creatures as
We count not worth the hanging, but none human,
To try the vigor of them, and apply
Allayments to their act; and by them gather
Their several virtues and effects.
Cornelius. Your highness
Shall from this practice but make hard your heart;
Besides, the seeing these effects will be
Both noisome and infectious.
Queen. O, content thee —

[*Enter Pisanio.*

Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him [*Aside.*
Will I first work; he 's for his master,
And enemy to my son.

Lady Martin thinks that Pisanio may have been servant to old Sicilius Leonatus, and on Posthumus's adoption by Cymbeline, have been appointed to the especial service of his orphaned son. If so, he had seen him grow up beside Imogen, and was probably deep in the plot (if we may call it so) of their marriage. On no other hypothesis, I think, can we account for the personal hatred felt for Pisanio, both by the Queen and Cloten.

Cornelius, as the Queen speaks to Pisanio with dissembling words, tells us in an aside, that misdoubting the intentions of the Queen, the box that he has given her contains drugs that will not kill, but only for a time produce a deathlike slumber.

The Queen, in her interview with Pisanio, is apparently endeavoring to persuade him to favor a divorce, and to urge upon his mistress the suit of Cloten; but she must have known that this was but pains lost, for at the same moment she drops the box of poisons, and Pisanio picking them up, she begs him to keep the box as containing medicines of great value, hoping he will take the drugs himself, and so deprive Imogen of the go-between between herself and her husband. The Queen's purpose already is, if she cannot raise her son to the throne by marrying him to Imogen, to remove her too. "Pisanio," says Lady Martin, "is a man of deep devotion, respectful, manly tenderness, and delicacy of feeling."

Scene 7.

This scene is also in the palace. Iachimo has arrived, bringing letters to Imogen. She, poor lady, has been passing months of ever-increasing unhappiness. She herself enumerates her trials, —

> A father cruel, and a step-dame false,
> A foolish suitor to a wedded lady,
> That hath her husband banished.

Then comes the thought of what at once is her chief sorrow and her only comfort, —

> O, that husband!
> My supreme crown of grief.

At this moment Pisanio, always in attendance, brings her word that a noble gentleman from Rome, with letters from her husband, desires an interview.

I often remember that in my youth I heard a friend say of her mother that the motto of her life had been fidelity; "and," she added, "it is not until we examine ourselves in all our relations to God, to others, and ourselves that we know fully what that means." Fidelity might be the motto for Imogen. Lady Martin, who gave her "the largest place in her heart" of all the characters she acted, says of her: "A grand and patient faithfulness is at the bottom of her character. Yet she can be angry, vehement, passionate, upon occasion. With a being of so fine and sensitive a nature, how could it have been otherwise? Her soul's strength and tenderness, speaking through her form and manners, impress all who see her with an irresistible charm. Her fine taste, her delicate ways, her feminine accomplishments, her sweet singing are brought before us in countless subtle touches. To her be-

longs especially the quality of grace, — that quality which Goethe says 'draws all men after it,' and which Racine says 'is even superior to beauty, or rather, is beauty sweetly animated.' "

Iachimo, fastidious and cloyed with sensuality, when he sees her is struck with admiring awe, and says to himself, as he presents her her husband's letter, —

> All of her that 's out of door 's most rich!
> If she be furnished with a mind so rare,
> She is alone the Arabian bird; and I
> Have lost the wager.

I think the act I can least forgive in Posthumus is the writing of this letter, recommending such a scoundrel as Iachimo, as "one of noblest note, to whose kindness I am most infinitely tied."

With pretty grace, on reading this, Imogen welcomes base Iachimo, who at once begins to pay her impertinent compliments, which Imogen with English innocence does not even understand. Twice she begs him to explain himself, then thinks, as he gazes at her with a leer, that he may be taken ill. At this, determined to pursue his base design, he begs Pisanio to go and keep company with his man, who is "peevish and a stranger."

Then Imogen begins to question Iachimo about her lord. She fears he grieves like her, and therefore says: "Is he disposed to mirth? — I hope he is." To her surprise she is answered, "No stranger in all Rome is so merry and so gamesome. He is called the British reveller."

Imogen says musingly that at home he always had been considered inclined to sadness. "I never saw him sad," exclaims Iachimo, and then goes on to tell how his chosen companion

is a Frenchman, sick at heart for love of a girl in his own land. The tempter gives his victim to understand that "the Frenchman sighs, the jolly Briton laughs," and derides the man who really puts trust in the faith and constancy of a woman. More and more bewildered, Imogen exclaims, "Will my lord say so?" Then, step by step, Iachimo lets the wife know that he pities her.

As I write this, my mind recalls Balzac's De Marsay, a man quite capable of acting the part of Iachimo, yet a man of polish, of accomplishments, rising high in the diplomatic world, successful with nearly every woman he makes love to, combining sensuality with the bitterest cold common-sense. Only I hardly think De Marsay would have been made sorry by the wreck of Imogen's happiness, which Iachimo in the end had the grace to be. He goes on, more and more perplexing Imogen, who believes in her husband too fully to comprehend the insinuations of his detractor. Finally, Iachimo growing bolder, insults her by talk such as her innocent ears are unaccustomed to, and draws from her one sorrowful word, — "My lord, I fear, hath forgot Britain."

The reason very pure women (Mrs. Pendennis, for example) are sometimes strangely ready to believe evil of the men who belong to them is, that in their estimate of the world, its temptations and the temptability of human nature, there is always allowance made for what we may call "an unknown quantity." They judge men without being able to weigh or measure this, and their judgments are sometimes singularly unjust, even of the men they love. For one instant this feeling gets the better of Imogen; then, as Iachimo continues his coarse talk, she puts him down with the dignity of a princess and a wedded wife, — "Let me hear no more."

But he proceeds, and urges her, upon her dignity, to be revenged on her unfaithful husband.

> *Imogen.* Revenged?
> How should I be revenged? If this be true
> (As I have such a heart that both mine ears
> Must not in haste abuse) — *if* it be true —
> How should I be revenged?

Then Iachimo insults her with an outrageous proposition. He dares not ask her to love *him*, he only proposes to let him be the instrument of her revenge upon her husband. She makes him no answer. She has not words to do so. She only calls aloud, "What ho! Pisanio!" Her faithful guardian, her husband's servitor, shall drive this reptile from her presence. But Iachimo has provided against that contingency. In the beginning of their interview he had sent away Pisanio.

Iachimo persists, and then provokes an outburst of righteous indignation, broken by cries of "What ho! Pisanio!" Till feeling himself utterly foiled, and seeing that the only way to win her toleration is through her devotion to her husband, he resumes the gentleman. One can fancy a De Marsay so recovering himself. Against the finished man of the world, learnèd alike in its graces and iniquities, is pitted the pure young English wife, impressed with his finish, inclined to him by her husband's praise, hardly able to understand him, afraid she may have misunderstood.

Iachimo, in terms of hyperbolical praise, takes back all he had said of Posthumus, and Imogen is pacified. In this court, where her dear lord is not permitted to be praised, how sweet is commendation of him to her ears! Iachimo, finding it pleases her, goes on: —

> He sits 'mongst men like a descended god;
> He hath a kind of honor sets him off.
> More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
> Most mighty princess, that I have adventured
> To try your taking of a false report; which hath
> Honored with confirmation your great judgment
> In the election of a sir so rare,
> Which you know cannot err.

Then, with sweet dignity, Imogen gives him her pardon, and offers him her services at the English court. She cannot like the man; but he is returning to Posthumus, and Posthumus has recommended him to her protection. As he is leaving her he turns back, and mentions that he has under his charge a trunk of valuables, — silver bought in France as a present for the Roman Emperor; her husband is one of the subscribers to this gift; would she allow him, for one night, to place it for security in her chamber? Imogen gives a pleased assent to this; and the first act — a very long one — comes to an end.

Act II. *Scene* 1.

The first scene in this act is one in which Cloten displays himself. The man is handsome, and possibly not wanting in physical courage; but here, in the space of a few sentences, he shows himself a gamester, a brawler, and a swearer, — insolent beyond measure to his inferiors in rank, loving flattery, and presuming on his position as the Queen's son, indulged and flattered from his infancy. At last his attention is diverted from himself and his oaths, and the man whose head he broke for spoiling his strike at bowls, by mention of a stranger who has appeared at court that day. "One of Posthumus's friends, it is thought," says the lord who tells him. "Leonatus Posthumus?" cries Cloten, — "a

banished rascal! And he 's another, whosoever he be." But in an instant he has changed his purpose. "Come! I 'll go see this Italian. What I have lost to-day at bowls I 'll win to-night of him."

The lords in attendance are making fun of the insolent coxcomb behind his back, with gibing comments upon every speech that falls from him. Here is what they say when he has gone to seek a fresh victim in the Italian: —

> That such a crafty devil as is his mother
> Should yield the world this ass! a woman that
> Bears all down with her brain; and this her son
> Cannot take two from twenty for his heart,
> And leave eighteen. Alas, poor princess,
> Thou divine Imogen! what thou endur'st
> Betwixt a father by thy step-dame governed,
> A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer
> More hateful than the foul expulsion is
> Of thy dear husband, than that horrid act
> Of the divorce he 'd make! The heavens hold firm
> The walls of thy dear honor; keep unshaked
> That temple, thy fair mind; that thou may'st stand,
> To enjoy thy banished lord, and this great land!

This, then, was public sentiment at court; and Cloten's purpose was well known of procuring the divorce of Imogen and Posthumus, and succeeding to the hand of the Princess, and subsequently to the throne, when his clever mother purposed to continue to govern the kingdom. This is why she will not outwardly ill-treat Imogen; why she speaks honeyed words to her, and pretends to be her friend. And if Imogen, even though deprived of the support of Pisanio, will not break her marriage vow, and hearken to Cloten's suit, there is poison, as a last resort, in store for her.

Scene 2.

We next find ourselves in the rich bed-chamber of Princess Imogen. Surrounded by the luxuries and refinements she has been used to all her life, she lies reading. In one corner of her chamber stands the chest, supposed to contain plate destined for the Emperor. "What hour is it?" asks Imogen. Her lady answers, "Almost midnight, madam."

How long those hours must have seemed to the fiend lying in wait in the trunk!

> *Imogen.* I have read three hours, then; mine eyes are weak.
> Fold down the leaf where I have left. To bed;
> Take not away the taper, leave it burning;
> And if thou canst awake by four o' the clock,
> I prithee, call me. Sleep hath seized me wholly.

You will remark all through this play (probably one of the last that Shakspeare wrote) the spirit of prayer. Here are Imogen's orisons: —

> To your protection I commend me, gods!
> From fairies, and the tempters of the night,
> Guard me, beseech ye! [*She sleeps.*]

Then forth from the chest rises the man with his unholy purpose. His conscience smites him. He bethinks him of "false Sextus, who wrought the deed of shame." Hardened as he is, the purity and beauty of his victim awe him. Although she is undefended, except by heavenly powers, he dares not touch her. Here is the whole of his soliloquy: —

> *Iachimo.* The crickets sing, and man's o'er-labored sense
> Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus
> Did softly press the rushes, ere he wakened
> The chastity he wounded. Cytherea,
> How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! fresh lily!

And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch—
But kiss; one kiss! . . . 'T is her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus! The flame o' the taper
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids
To see th' enclosèd lights, now canopied
Under these windows. White and azure, laced
With bits of heaven's own tinct.

[*Takes out his tablets.*

But my design
To note the chamber! I will write all down.
Such and such pictures; there the window; such
The adornment of her bed. The arras, figures,
Why, such and such; and the contents o' the story.
Ah, but some natural notes about her body,
Above ten thousand meaner movables,
Would testify, to enrich mine inventory.
O sleep, that apest death, lie dull upon her!
And be her sense but as a monument,
Thus in a chapel lying! Come off, come off.

[*Taking off her bracelet.*

As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard!
'T is mine; and *this* will witness outwardly,
As strongly as the conscience does within,
To the madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a cowslip. Here 's a voucher
Stronger than ever law could make. This secret
Will force him think I have picked the lock, and ta'en
The treasure of her honor. No more. To what end?
Why should I write this down, that 's riveted,
Screwed to my memory? She hath been reading late
The tale of Tereus; here the leaf's turned down,
Where Philomel gave up. I have enough;
To the trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night! that dawning
May bare the raven's eye. I lodge in fear;
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here.

The awe inspired by the purity of Imogen in the breast of this bad man of the world, this slanderer of women, is the

highest tribute paid to her. The book she had been reading told the story of Philomela and her sister Procene, who, in extremity, when pursued by a wanton god-head, were changed, the one into a nightingale, the other into a swallow.

Scene 3.

Here we again find Cloten, who, after a night of gambling, has brought musicians to serenade her whom *he* calls "that foolish Imogen," and *others* "Imogen the divine."

Then comes one of the loveliest of Shakspeare's lovely songs: —

Hark, hark! The lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise.

The King and Queen come in, early astir on public business. Caius Lucius has arrived, ambassador from Rome. Cloten says, "I am glad I was up so late, for that's the reason I am up so early."

He persists in forcing his way into Imogen's presence. She, having risen early, comes forth from her chamber. The sweet, firm courtesy with which she repels Cloten's advances at first, is very beautiful. When provoked into alluding to his folly, she hastens to bind up the wounds "that her sweet teachings make," with penitent words. Then, seeing that such courtesy has no effect, and that Cloten is preparing to renew his suit, she speaks again, with a firmness which she thinks he cannot misconstrue.

He answers her by reminding her of her duty of obedience as a daughter, and heaps reproach and contumely upon Posthumus. Then, indeed, Imogen's anger bursts forth.

In the midst of her indignation she suddenly perceives that her bracelet is not upon her arm, and stays herself with, "What ho! Pisanio!" In broken words she complains of the persecution that has frightened and angered her, and says to Pisanio: —

> Go, bid my woman
> Search for a jewel, that too casually
> Hath left mine arm; it was thy master's: 'shrew me,
> If I would lose it for a revenue
> Of any king's in Europe. I do think
> I saw't this morning: confident I am
> Last night 't was on mine arm; I kissed it:
> I hope it be not gone, to tell my lord
> That I kiss aught but he.

Imogen, angry, nervous, and indignant, and Cloten, wounded and spiteful, close this scene with a few more words. With a sarcastic sentence, and a dignified sweep, Imogen passes back into her chamber.

Scene 4.

This is that scene in Rome where Iachimo gives account of his mission in England to the unsuspecting Leonatus Posthumus. Another trouble now disquiets the exile. The embassy of Caius Lucius is to require arrearages of tribute, neglected by Cymbeline, to be paid at once to the Roman Emperor. Posthumus feels as the American loyalists in England felt during our war of the Revolution, when, whatever their political faith might be, their hearts were with their countrymen. His first greeting to Iachimo is an expression

of surprise at the promptitude of his return; then he at once leads the way to the great subject. The way in which Iachimo gives his letters to Posthumus, and while he reads them turns aside to talk carelessly of the embassy of Caius Lucius should be noted. Imogen's sweet letters are of course satisfactory, and Posthumus says, pointing exultingly to his diamond: —

> Sparkles this stone as it was wont? Or is 't
> Too dull for your good wearing?

"If I *had* lost it," replies Iachimo, according to the old corrector of the folio Shakspeare, "I should more than have lost the worth of it in gold," —

> I 'd make a journey twice as far to enjoy
> A second night of such sweet shortness, as
> Was mine in Britain, — for the ring is won.

I have said already, and I here repeat, that I by no means consider Iachimo the vulgar stage villain. Like Balzac's Henri de Marsay, he is a man utterly without principle, with vanity which would be almost ludicrous were it not that success appears to justify it. He has all the vices that are consistent with being a gentleman (according to his own perverted code). In his intercourse with *men* he observes strictly what the morality of the Jockey Club would deem the line of honor. His perceptions are keen on every subject; he delights in opening the eyes of those around him. And when he pulls away the mask with which vice, folly, or selfishness conceals itself, part of the pleasure to him is to demonstrate how little worse he is than other people. He is always ready to cry, — and cry with truth, — "I could have told you so," after a misfortune. He is handsome; he is stripped of all

delusions; he acknowledges no ties but those of *camaraderie*, and here and there of friendship (of a kind); but his business in life is that of a woman-hunter. He would spare no pains to run any woman down; he would stalk her, or pursue her; the more pure she was, the better; the greater the resistance, the greater glory would be his. Such a man would have been quite capable of appreciating the loveliness and fidelity of Imogen; of acknowledging that to make himself her lover (at least in the time allotted to him) was wholly impossible, and of refusing to accept his defeat so long as by any device Posthumus could be imposed upon.

By stroke after stroke Iachimo beats down all the defences of his victim. If he could not overcome the fidelity of Imogen, he will that of her husband. Posthumus is contemptuous; then he thinks it all an indecent joke; then he threatens the traducer; then he calls upon him for proofs.

Here is Iachimo's description of Imogen's bedchamber: —

> It was hanged
> With tapestry of silk and silver; the story,
> Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
> And Cydnus swelled above the banks, or for
> The press of boats, or pride, — a piece of work
> So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive
> In workmanship and value; which I wondered,
> Could be so rarely and exactly wrought. . . .
> The chimney
> Is south the chamber; and the chimney-piece,
> Chaste Dian, bathing. Never saw I figures
> So likely to report themselves; the cutter
> Was as another Nature, dumb, — outwent her,
> Motion and breath left out. . . .
> The roof o' the chamber
> With golden cherubins is fretted. Her andirons

(I had forgot them) were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
Depending on their brands.

"This is true," answers Posthumus, with the very sword in his heart. "Still, you might have learned this from description."

Then Iachimo, exulting in the agony he is going to inflict, pulls forth the bracelet, tosses it in his hand, and pockets it again.

"Jove!" cries Posthumus; "once more let me behold it! Is it that which I left with her?"

Iachimo, with cool impertinence (with frightful frankness, had it been the truth), replies: —

Sir (I thank her), *that!*
She stripped it from her arm. I see her yet.
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enriched it too. She gave it me, and said
She prized it once.

"May be," exclaimed Posthumus, "she plucked it off to send to me."

This quiet suggestion alarms Iachimo, who asks hurriedly, "She writes so to you, doth she?"

Alas! the supposition has nothing to support it.

"O! no, no, no," cries Posthumus, flinging him the ring, "'t is true! Here, — take this too. It is a basilisk, kills me to look on 't."

Here Philario, moved by his guest's agony, breaks in with several suggestions: "The bracelet may have been stolen by a servant."

"Very true!" cries Posthumus, "and so I hope he came by 't. Give back my ring!"

Iachimo then swears (he had not dared before to swear) he had it from her arm.

At this Posthumus grows frantic; again flings at him the ring, and sinks down in an exhaustion of suffering. Philario interposes again. He says, "Such infidelity is not suddenly to be believed by one persuaded well. . . ." But Iachimo brings forward his last proof, — the "mole cinque-spotted on her left breast," that he had seen when he drew off the bracelet. At this Posthumus goes beside himself. He is mad, and though in the presence of the others (scene 5) he raves like a lunatic. His faith in all things pure, lovely, and of good report is shattered to pieces. Of course, Posthumus is far inferior in strength of moral fibre to his wife, but then there is a proneness to jealousy, even in good men, which does not exist in a good woman. As one reads these scenes one is inclined to have patience with him in his transports, to be less hard on him than some critics have been for his insults to his wife, and for his subsequent determination to exercise the privilege, never denied to husbands in past ages, of taking the life of a guilty woman. This was law in old times, it is still law with many nations, and appears (to judge by the newspapers) to be a permitted custom even among ourselves.

Act III. *Scene* 1.

In this first scene of the third act, Caius Lucius, the Ambassador, has audience with Cymbeline. Shakspeare has taken this opportunity to put a fine picture of sea-girdled Britain into the mouth of the Queen. It is a passage to thrill the hearts of Englishmen.

> Remember, sir, my liege,
> The kings your ancestors; together with

> The natural bravery of your isle; which stands
> As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in
> With rocks unscalable, and roaring waters;
> With sands, that will not bear your enemies' boats,
> But suck them up to the top-mast. A kind of conquest
> Cæsar made here; but made not here his brag,
> Of *came*, and *saw*, and *overcame;* with shame
> (The first that ever touched him) he was carried
> From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping
> (Poor ignorant baubles!) on our terrible seas,
> Like egg-shells moved upon their surges, cracked
> As easily 'gainst our rocks.

Shakspeare must have been thinking of the defeat of the Armada when he wrote this, — an event within his memory.

The high courtesy of the King and the Ambassador is in striking contrast with the feminine vehemence of the Queen (all women are vehement in politics when their feelings are excited), and the coarse interpositions of Cloten. The tribute is refused, and war is declared between Britain and Rome.

Scene 2.

Pisanio has received his master's letter. He is to execute vengeance, in his master's name, on Imogen, and he is almost as much beside himself with horror as Posthumus has been with jealousy.

> Disloyal? No:
> She 's punished for her truth; and undergoes,
> More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
> As would take in some virtue. O, my master!
> Thy mind to her is now as low as were
> Thy fortunes.

As he is cursing the very paper on which the cruel words are written, Imogen enters. Pisanio's letter had enclosed one to herself. It is lovely to see how she gloats over it,

how she lingers over the envelope with loving words before she opens it. It is a cautious letter; not lover-like, but very false. It tells her that Posthumus has returned to Britain, — is in Wales, — at Milford Haven. "What your own love will out of this news advise you," he says, "follow."

Remark that though Posthumus is going to kill her for unfaithfulness, he never for a moment doubts that her love for him will carry her to Milford Haven. Then Imogen, in her turn, is beside herself; she is wild with happiness. "O for a horse with wings!" she cries. "How far is Milford Haven? — blessed Milford Haven! How can we get there? How can we leave the court? How many miles an hour can we ride?"

Every word sticks a knife into the heart of Pisanio. He answers her raptures with a crabbed retainer's discouraging words. She sends him to provide her horses, and a riding-dress; and will brook no remonstrance, no delay.

Scene 3.

This scene is in the mountains of South Wales. Belarius, a noble general of Britain, had been unjustly treated about twenty years before by Cymbeline. He still grieves for the old days when his royal master loved him. On false accusation, that master (easily led and weak) had believed him confederate with the Romans. He was banished, but stole away the two boy-princes, brothers to Imogen, heirs to the British throne. The boys have grown up noble, pure, and good, and are "mighty hunters." But as they feel their manhood and their strength, their royal blood stirs in them. Guiderius, the elder by three years, longs for the stir of life, the battle and the war-shout, while Arviragus, the younger,

— the poet (the Friedel to the Ebbo in Miss Yonge's "Dove in the Eagle's Nest"), asks Belarius, —

> What should we speak of,
> When we are old as you? when we shall hear
> The rain and wind beat dark December, how,
> In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse
> The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing;
> We are beastly; subtle as the fox, for prey;
> Like war-like as the wolf for what we eat.
> Our valor is to chase what flies; our cage
> We make a quire, as doth the prison bird,
> And sing our bondage freely.

The boys are introduced as exhorted by Belarius (whom they think their father) not to forget their morning orisons. This gives us a kindly first impression of old Belarius and of his young companions. The prayer does not shock us as stage-prayers do in modern opera. It is just enough for its purpose; the holy name of God is not taken in vain.

After this prayer the inhabitants of the cave go forth to their day's labor, which is to provide themselves with food. In this, note the difference between the sylvan life in the fairy-forest of Arden, and the real, rude, vigorous life of mountain hunters.

Scene 4.

This scene is in the woods surrounding Milford Haven; indeed, Milford is in sight from the hill-tops. Sweet Imogen, who had started so eager and in such high hope, is weary with the journey. Nor has she found a responsive travelling companion in old Pisanio. At first, in the exuberance of her happiness, she had not noticed his dejection. *Now* she questions him, evidently in some apprehension. Pisanio does not speak, but holds out to her her husband's letter.

"My husband's hand!" she cries, and her first thought is "My husband is in trouble!" —

> He must be over-reached
> By that drug-damnèd Italy.

"Please you, read," says Pisanio, "that you may know my misery."

She reads indeed, and as she reads Pisanio says: —

> What shall I need to draw my sword? The paper
> Hath cut her throat already.

He tries to rouse her.

> *Imogen.* False to his bed! What is it to be false?
> To lie in watch there, and to think on him?
> To weep 'twixt clock and clock? If sleep charge nature,
> To break it with a fearful dream of him,
> And cry myself awake? That 's false to his bed,
> Is it?

She does not think upon her husband's cruelty; she shows no terror as to her own fate. She does not take it in. All her thought is of this terrible — this astounding — accusation. Then she bethinks her of Iachimo, not indeed as the author of *this* falsehood, but as having told her that her husband in Rome was playing false to her with other women. *This* must have changed him and perverted him; *this* has set him against her. Using a woman's simile, for Imogen is skilful in needlework, she says: —

> Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion;
> And, for I am richer than to hang by the walls,
> I must be ripped: — to pieces with me!

The same thought strikes her that has struck her husband, — if one so noble can be false, it puts a doubt upon all love and honor.

Turning fiercely to Pisanio, she bids him do his master's bidding, only reporting that she had been obedient. Alas! obedience in this is the last wifely duty that is left for her.

Seeing Pisanio will not do the deed, she entreats him, saying: —

> Against self-slaughter
> There is a prohibition so divine
> It cravens my weak hand. Come, here 's my heart.

But something lies upon that heart. It is her husband's letters. She draws them forth, and scatters them to the winds. In all her grief her habit of thinking of him first leads her to pity him for the woe that he will feel, when his infatuation for the Italian woman he now loves has passed, and when his memory recalls the wife who had so fondly loved him.

Again she turns impatiently to Pisanio. But Pisanio utterly refuses to strike her. "Why, then," she asks, "have you brought me so far from court to change your purpose?"

"My end was to gain time," is the substance of his answer; "I never meant to do it."

Her petulance with old Pisanio is most touching. It shows her very nature overthrown, or rather (for Imogen could be impatient at times) it shows how the restraints that ordinarily kept her temper in check have been swept away.

"Madam," says Pisanio, "I thought you would not back again."

"Most like," replies Imogen, "bringing me here to kill me."

Then Pisanio, at last obtaining a hearing, assures her that his master has been misled by some unnatural villain. He unfolds to her his plan. He has provided boy's raiment for

her. She can in this disguise make her way to Milford Haven, thence to Rome in the train of the ambassador Caius Lucius, and being in Rome she will find herself near Posthumus, and can herself unravel the mystery. Posthumus shall meanwhile receive from Pisanio some bloody sign that his commands have been executed.

Imogen exclaims: —

> Through peril to my modesty, not death on 't,
> I would adventure.

Then Pisanio gives her his instructions: —

> You must forget to be a woman; change
> Command into obedience; fear and niceness
> (The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
> Woman its pretty self) to a waggish courage;
> Ready in gibes, quick-answered, saucy, and
> As quarrelous as the weasel.

And last of all, she must forget that care in dress which, princess as she is, has ever distinguished her. How little fitted Imogen was to act up to Pisanio's instructions is shown in the sequel.

At parting Pisanio presents her with the box of medicines given to him by the Queen. Should she be sea-sick while travelling to Rome, or stomach-qualmed on land, "a drachm of this," he says, "will drive away distemper."

Scene 5.

This scene is in Cymbeline's palace. The Ambassador from Rome here takes his leave.

In presence of war, Cloten, who seems not to be wanting in personal courage, assumes something like dignity. Cymbeline, missing Imogen on this occasion of state, and very

fussy upon points of respect due to himself, has his daughter sent for. The Queen, dreading collision between the Princess and her father, which may injure her own plans, says: —

> 'Beseech your majesty,
> Forbear sharp speeches to her; she 's a lady
> So tender of rebukes that words are strokes,
> And strokes death to her.

Alas! poor Imogen. We may judge from this how dreadful it must have been to her to be called vile, coarse names in her husband's letter to Pisanio. As she herself said on reading them, "Mine ear itself can take no deeper wound."

But Imogen is gone. She cannot answer her father's summons, and Cymbeline rages, while the Queen coolly calculates that she may now have it in her power to bestow the crown of Britain.

As Cloten is questioning within himself whether he most loves or most hates Imogen, Pisanio returns. Being cross-questioned by Cloten with his usual upstart impudence, he shows him Posthumus's letter to his wife, which he had picked up when she tore those cherished letters from her bosom. By this Cloten believes he learns that she has gone to meet Posthumus at Milford Haven. Clumsily endeavoring to attach Pisanio to himself by flattery and money, he goes on to request of him a suit of Posthumus's clothes, which Pisanio brings him. I fancy the old man was not willing to quarrel with Cloten lest his ability to help Imogen should be curtailed.

Scene 6.

The story now returns to Imogen. Unused to mountain-walking, she had failed to reach Milford Haven, which was in

sight when Pisanio left her, and wandering up and down the hills, she has come after two days spent on foot, and two nights passed in the woods, to the cave of Belarius. Two beggars, whom she doubtless had relieved with money, had told her that she could not miss her way, but she, poor Princess, in her inexperience, *had* missed it. And now her heart has gone back to Posthumus; again she calls him her "dear lord." Perceiving the cave, she peers into it timidly. She dreads rough men, she dreads wild beasts, as, holding her sword awkwardly before her, she creeps through the doorway.

Shortly after, the brothers and Belarius return hungry and weary. There is cold meat in the cave, and they will stay their appetites on that till they can cook their supper. Glancing into the cave, however, they perceive something that Belarius calls a fairy, an angel, a paragon. As he speaks, Imogen, hearing voices, comes forth.

Judge how like her speech is to that of a quarrelsome and saucy page: —

Imogen. Good masters, harm me not.
Before I entered here, I called; and thought
To have begged, or bought, what I have took. Good troth,
I have stolen nought; nor would not, though I had found
Gold strewed o' the floor. Here 's money for my meat.
I would have left it on the board so soon
As I had made my meal; and parted
With prayers for the provider.
Guiderius. Money, youth?
Arviragus. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!
As 't is no better reckoned, but of those
Who worship dirty gods.
Imogen. I see you are angry.
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.

Belarius. Whither bound?
Imogen. To Milford Haven, sir.
Belarius. What is your name?
Imogen. Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy; he embarked at Milford;
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
I am fallen in this offence.
Belarius. Prithee, fair youth,
Think us no churls; nor measure our good minds
By this rude place we live in. Well encountered!
'T is almost night: you shall have better cheer
Ere you depart; and thanks, to stay and eat it.
Boys, bid him welcome.

Then Guiderius, the elder, says he would have made his suit to the lad if he had been a woman, but Arviragus, not so much a man as his elder brother, hails Fidele as a comrade. Suddenly something inspires in Imogen a remembrance of her brothers. She wishes they were living. Were she not heiress to a kingdom, she would be more an equal match "for thee, Posthumus." Hope has returned to her heart. Surely, things must yet come right between her and him she used to honor as well as love.

Scene 7.

We now learn that messengers have been sent from Rome to intercept Caius Lucius, and to order him to undertake the war with Britain. They bear him his appointment as pro-consul.

ACT IV. *Scene* 1.

Cloten, imagining that Posthumus is by appointment to meet Imogen in those Welsh woods, hopes to meet her first, and in Posthumus's clothes to deceive and ruin her. Her humiliation being accomplished, and her husband killed

before her eyes, Cloten brutally proposes to drive this fair creature home before him to her father. Surely, we need not count "Cymbeline" a tragedy because this wretch's death was near at hand.

Scene 2.

Imogen is sick, and is recommended by her kind hosts to remain in the cave while they go forth to hunt. Each brother, however, offers to stay with her. Old Belarius, who has tended them so faithfully for years, is not a little hurt that both boys should profess that they already love the stranger as well as they do him. I think he suspects Imogen's sex, too, and is anxious about the love professed for her by Guiderius.

Then these "kind creatures" being gone, Imogen takes out the Queen's box, and swallows a portion of her drug. We learn from the boys' talk that already Imogen's singing, her dainty cookery, and gentle, housewifely ways have made home charming to them.

In comes Cloten, — not a very young man, for Belarius recognizes him. Belarius is fearful of being pursued, and discovered. While he and Arviragus search the neighboring brushwood to see if the new comer be attended by soldiers, Guiderius remains to parley with him. The brave young mountaineer is not used to be addressed with the insolence with which Cloten always speaks to those he considers his inferiors. He gives him back word for word. Finally, they come to blows. Guiderius is conqueror, and cuts off Cloten's head. Belarius is greatly alarmed at this exploit, though Guiderius himself exults in it, having slain his foe only in self-defence; and Arviragus sustains him, saying, "My brother hath done well."

An Eolian harp, invented by Belarius, here begins to play, as Arviragus, who has been into the cave, comes out bearing Imogen lifeless in his arms. The lament made over the supposed corpse is very beautiful. Arviragus, the poet by nature, says : —

> With fairest flowers,
> Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
> I 'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
> The flower that 's like thy face, pale primrose ; nor
> The azured hare-bell, like thy veins ; no, nor
> The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
> Out-sweetened not thy breath ; the red-breast would,
> With charitable bill (O bill, sore-shaming
> Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
> Without a monument !), bring thee all this ;
> Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,
> To winter-ground thy corse.
> *Guiderius.* Prithee, have done,
> And do not play in wench-like words with that
> Which is so serious. Let us bury him.

Guiderius, who has just fleshed his maiden sword, naturally turns upon his brother for any touch of womanliness ; besides his own grief is deep and cannot bear mere words.

Belarius persuades them both to include the body of Cloten in their funeral ceremonies, for they have decided to bury dead Fidele as they buried their nurse, Euriphile, whom they believed to be their mother. Here is another little touch showing us their religious training, and Shakspeare's religious delicacy in hinting only at holy things. They are preparing Imogen's body for sepulchre, and Guiderius says :

> My brother, we must lay his head to the east,
> My father hath a reason for it.

The song they sing is a lovely one : —

SONG.

Guiderius. Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.
Arviragus. Fear no more the frown o' the great;
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke.
Care no more to clothe, and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak.
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

But the song generally sung in this place on the stage is an interpolation by Collins.

They leave the bodies strewn with flowers, meaning to bury them at set of sun.

When they have gone, Imogen, who had drunk — not poison, but — the sleeping-draught prepared by Dr. Cornelius, awakes bewildered. She thinks she must have dreamed that she was a cave-keeper and cook to honest creatures. Then suddenly she sees lying at her side a headless man, and his clothes are the clothes of her Posthumus. At once her fury breaks out against Pisanio. *He* has conspired with Cloten; *he* has deceived her husband and herself. "O, damned Pisanio!" she exclaims again and again. "O, damned Pisanio!"

As, all bloody, she lies stretched upon the corpse (we grudge Cloten each tear that she sheds over him), Caius Lucius, the Roman general, and his soldiers come by. They raise the boy, and ask his name. Imogen replies: —

I am nothing; or if not,
Nothing to be were better. This was my master,

> A very valiant Briton, and a good,
> That here by mountaineers lies slain. Alas!
> There are no more such masters. I may wander
> From east to occident, cry out for service,
> Try many, all good, serve truly, never
> Find such another master.

And when she has to give him a fictitious name the falsehood troubles her. She puts up a little prayer that she may be forgiven. The Romans, touched with her fidelity and grief, assist her with their pikes and partisans, to bury the dead body; and Lucius, with kind words, takes her as a page into his service.

Scene 3.

The Queen, with all her brain and all her scheming, is meeting her just punishment, — she lies stricken with mortal sickness; and Cymbeline, surrounded by enemies, and accustomed always to lean on somebody, now mourns for Imogen. Troubles too are thickening about him from the Roman invasion. Pisanio has received no news from Rome since he sent tidings of Imogen's death to Posthumus; no word has come from Imogen, and Cloten has sunk out of sight utterly. "Wherein I 'm false I 'm honest," he says; "not true to be true."

Scene 4.

The two young Princes, not knowing their high birth, are urging Belarius to let them go to the war. He sees plainly, with fear and trembling, that he cannot withhold them longer.

ACT V. *Scene* 1.

Here we see Posthumus, dressed as a Roman soldier, with the handkerchief supposed to be stained with his wife's blood

in his hand. "Alas!" he cries, "if every married man should take my course, how many men would murder wives far better than themselves!" He reproaches the gods that they had not saved the noble Imogen to repent, and struck *him*, the wretch more worthy of their vengeance. But Imogen, he reflects afterwards, is now "all heaven's own." He prays, "Ye gods, do your blest wills and make me blessèd to obey."

He has come over to Britain with the Romans, but now he will desert them, and take part with British men. He has done Britain wrong enough in having killed her future Queen; now he will fight for Britain.

> So I 'll die
> For thee, O Imogen! e'en for whom my life
> Is, every breath, a death.

With that he changes his Roman armor for the suit of a British peasant.

Scene 2.

This is the scene of the battle. In the foreground Posthumus, as a Briton, fights with Iachimo, the Roman. Posthumus vanquishes and disarms Iachimo, but with a generosity born of his repentance, turns aside and spares him. Iachimo thinks that he has lost his skill in arms because the gods are angry at him for his sin against a noble lady. Here ceases my parallel between Iachimo and De Marsay. Iachimo had faith enough to lead him to repentance; the Frenchman of the nineteenth century had not so much faith as the devils have, who have enough to make them tremble.

The Britons are getting worsted, when Belarius and his boys break in and change the fortunes of the day. Cymbeline is rescued by their prowess, seconded by that of Posthumus.

Scene 3.

Here Posthumus describes to a British lord how Belarius and his boys held a narrow lane against the whole Roman army. It is Horatius, Herminius, and Lartius over again. Posthumus, not having been able to lose his life in battle, resolves to yield himself to the first man he sees. If a Roman he will be executed as a deserter, if a Briton he is no less sure of death as soon as he has told his name.

The first persons who enter are Britons. They are talking of Posthumus's own brilliant deeds. He surrenders to them as an obscure Roman.

Scene 4.

We now see Posthumus deeply penitent and in prison. He dreams that his father, mother, and brave brothers — none of whom he ever knew — come round him in a vision; while grieving for his fault, they deal with it gently, and pray the gods for his forgiveness. I presume that this scene, which is conducted in recitative, added to the musical attractions of the play; it does not improve it as a story or a drama.

> He shall be lord of Lady Imogen,
> And happier much by his afflictions made,

is Jupiter's answer to the prayers offered up by his ghostly kindred. Waking, Posthumus is about to be led to execution, when an order arrives to knock off his fetters, and bring him before the King.

Scene 5.

King Cymbeline has discovered three of the brave men who saved the fortunes of the day, — Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus; the fourth is still wanting. The King is

surrounded by his court, his lords, and his deliverers. Here enter messengers to say the Queen is dead. Not only is she dead, but she has confessed her crimes and evil purposes upon her death-bed.

Then the Roman prisoners are brought in, among them Imogen, as a page in attendance upon Caius Lucius, who makes a noble Roman speech, ending with these words: —

> This one thing only
> I will entreat: my boy, a Briton born,
> Let him be ransomed. Never master had
> A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,
> So tender over his occasions, true,
> So feat, so nurse-like; let his virtue join
> With my request, which, I 'll make bold, your highness
> Cannot deny; he hath done no Briton harm,
> Though he hath served a Roman. Save him, sir,
> And spare no blood beside.

Cymbeline, moved by the looks of the page, touched by the speech of Lucius, and willing to do a generous thing gracefully, not only gives the boy his liberty, but promotes him to his favor, and tells him to ask a boon, suggesting that it should be the life of a prisoner. Neither Cymbeline nor any one else doubts that the lad will ask the life of Lucius. Indeed, that generous Roman says, —

> I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad;
> And yet I know thou wilt.

But Imogen has seen Iachimo in the crowd of prisoners. On his finger gleams her own ring. She stands gazing at him speechless. Finally, she requests a moment's private interview with Cymbeline. I think she then suggests that the ring the Roman wears is the valuable diamond of

Cymbeline's first wife; for he comes back eager to know its history.

Then Iachimo, conscience-stricken and in deadly superstitious terror, tells, with much verbiage and many flatteries, by which he hopes to appease the British King, the story of his guilt, and wholly exonerates Imogen. As he is saying, speaking of Posthumus, "Methinks I see him now, —" "Thou dost!" exclaims Posthumus, starting forward and confronting him. Then the unhappy husband goes on to call down vengeance of all kinds upon himself. As he cries,

> O Imogen!
> My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
> Imogen, Imogen!

she, standing by, can bear it no longer, but springs forward to comfort him. He thinks the Roman page means only to make sport of his great misery. He strikes her, and she falls. Then Pisanio starts forward with,

> O my Lord Posthumus!
> You ne'er killed Imogen till now. Help, help!
> Mine honored lady!

Posthumus staggers backward. He dares not clasp his wife; he dares not understand what is now passing round him. Cymbeline begins to thank the gods; but Imogen, recovering herself, repulses Pisanio as a would-be poisoner. Then Dr. Cornelius makes that misunderstanding straight. Guiderius and Arviragus with amazement recognize the dead Fidele. Cymbeline tells Imogen her "mother's dead." With gentle dignity she says, "I'm sorry for it, sir." Cloten too is missing. Then Pisanio again steps forward, and tells how he lent him a suit of Posthumus's clothes, in which he set

forth to Milford to surprise Imogen, and bring her to dishonor. Here Guiderius breaks in with, —

> Let me end the story:
> I slew him there.

Cymbeline is greatly discomposed, not only by the death of Cloten, but by the necessity the law lays upon him of condemning to death an inferior who has slain a man of rank higher than his own. Guiderius, prince-like, sticks to the truth. He has done the deed, and he is not ashamed of it. Cloten deserved his death, and got it. Then Belarius reveals the parentage of his adopted sons.

All this while Imogen and Posthumus are clasped in each other's arms. Cymbeline, as he acknowledges the young heroes for his heirs and children, says somewhat regretfully: —

> O Imogen!
> Thou hast lost by this a kingdom.
> *Imogen.* No, my lord;
> I have got two worlds by 't.

And after loving greetings to her brothers, she hails Belarius as another father, thus disposing the heart of Cymbeline towards him.

She next, having secured pardon for Belarius, turns to Lucius, whose fate she had all along known would be in her hands. Cymbeline has but one regret in all this happiness, — he cannot find the forlorn soldier who aided his brave sons and their foster-father to guard the lane.

Posthumus avows himself that soldier. "Pardon," cries Cymbeline, "is the word for all." Even Iachimo is pardoned; and Cymbeline, turning to Lucius, not only offers him his freedom, but a treaty which promises to Rome the

very tribute in dispute. This is the usual ending to any English war. England, it is said, always in her European conflicts triumphs in arms, and makes peace by giving back all, and more than all, that she contended for.

Though there is very little of the comic element in this play, it seems impossible with such an ending to call "Cymbeline" a tragedy. It is rather an exquisite and composite romantic drama, with its scene laid so far back in the dim past that manners, incidents, and probabilities are all removed out of the realm of fact, and are moulded at the poet's will by his creative fancy.

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